

Hafa Adai!

MVA joins tourism Expo Japan 2024 in Tokyo. **PAGE 3**

NMHC announces public access to historic records on digital archive. **PAGE 5**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 200

www.saipantribune.com

MONDAY OCTOBER 7, 2024

www.facebook.com/saipantribune

## Decomposing body found in Garapan

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**

chrystal\_marino@saipantribune.com  
CORRESPONDENT

A dead body was discovered in a shack by the beach just behind an online remittance building in Garapan yesterday afternoon.

According to the Department of Public Safety, they received a call around 12:41pm reporting a body

**See BODY on Page 4**



Just behind this building and shrubbery is small shack where a decomposing body was found yesterday in Garapan.

CHRYSTAL MARINO



DPS

Department of Public Safety K-9 officer Boss.



DPS

Department of Public Safety K-9 officer Beni.

Probe confirms A/C malfunction in K-9 officers' deaths

» **Handlers undergo counseling and will resume duties soon**

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**

chrystal\_marino@saipantribune.com  
CORRESPONDENT

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Anthony Macaranas said an investigation confirmed mechanical malfunction on the car's air-conditioning where two K-9 officers were left led to the Sept. 8 accidental deaths of Beni and Boss.

**See PROBE on Page 4**

## Watson's request for power state of emergency declaration denied



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. last Friday held an emergency board meeting to address CUC executive director Kevin Watson's request for the board to ask Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to issue an Emergency Declaration regarding power generation in Saipan and Rota.

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**

kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors has denied CUC executive director Kevin Watson's ask for the board to approve an urgent request to Gov.

**See WATSON on Page 4**

## IN RESPONSE TO PASSAGE OF BILL TO REMOVE MARIJUANA FROM DRUG TESTING

'Bill falls far short in addressing needs to reforms cannabis tourism industry'

### RELATED NEWS

■ **Camacho: Marijuana bill was to level the playing field. PAGE 2**

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**

kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A cannabis industry reform activist says while the bill to remove marijuana from pre-employment drug testing re-



Bennett

quirements is a step in the right direction, it falls short in addressing needs to reform the industry.

Ambrose Bennett, whose services has been retained by Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to head his

**See BILL on Page 4**

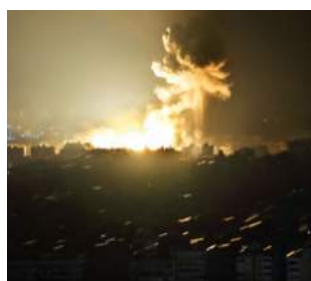
## INSIDE



### LOCAL

The Public School System will keep working toward initiatives, programs, and practices that not only meet the diverse needs of learners, but also emphasize giving parents.

**PAGE 9**



### WORLD

Powerful new explosions rocked Beirut's southern suburbs late Saturday as Israel expanded its bombardment in Lebanon, also striking a Palestinian refugee camp deep in the north for the first time as it targeted both Hezbollah and Hamas fighters.

**PAGE 10**



### LIFE & STYLE

A woman who says she worked as a hair-and-makeup stylist for Garth Brooks alleged in a lawsuit filed Thursday that he raped her in a Los Angeles hotel in 2019.

**PAGE 11**



SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



**GOT A NEWS TIP?**

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com



# Local

## Camacho: Marijuana bill was to level the playing field

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Rep. Diego Vincent Camacho (D-Saipan) shares that he is glad that Gov. Arnold I. Palacios has finally signed into law House Bill 23-50 which essentially removes marijuana from all pre-employment drug testing for government employees as this levels the playing field for all those interested in applying

for government positions.

Last Wednesday, Palacios signed H.B. 23-50 into Public Law 23-27 which basically removes marijuana from all pre-employment drug testing for government employees with certain exceptions.

The bill's author, Camacho, shared that the bill encourages anyone to apply for government positions regardless if they test positive

for marijuana use.

"I'm glad the governor finally passed this bill. The key word here is 'pre-employment.' The bill is really just for pre-employment. It's so there's no discrimination against those who choose to consume cannabis, legally, before trying to obtain employment in the government. It's really to encourage those who have been seeking employ-

ment in the government sector and to get that door open. Anything after that is on the employee," he said.

Although in a perfect world, Camacho said, the aim was to remove marijuana completely from drug tests, there were a lot of concerns.

"Especially with [cannabis] still being heavily regulated federally. But it's only a matter of time before cannabis will be

rescheduled to a Schedule III drug. I believe that is happening as we speak," he said.

As for drug testing while employed, Camacho said each agency and department has its own regulations in terms of drug testing.

"Nothing changes in terms of reasonable suspicion and [the employee] was told to undergo a drug test. If they're found positive, that's on the employee," he said.

Meanwhile, Camacho shares that there are some exemptions.

"We mirrored this from states that have introduced similar legislation. So, this bill would exempt those in law enforcement, first responders, and safety sensitive positions. The public law also gives the Office of Personnel Management the ability to determine those positions," he said.

Camacho also clarified that this bill is only for those ap-

plying for jobs in the government. However, he remains hopeful that the legislation will encourage the private sector to follow the government's lead.

"We can't impede on the private sector as cannabis is still heavily regulated on the federal side but that could all change once the drug is rescheduled. For now, this is all that we have control over. I hope this bill does encourage those in the private sector to amend their regulations in terms of cannabis. After all, it's legal here," he said.

"We need to get with the times and treat marijuana similar to alcohol. For example, no employee is going to choose to go to work intoxicated, it should be no different with cannabis. That's the main reasoning for this. We have to move forward and we need to trust our people and employees to comply," he added.

## Palacios declared Sept 23-27 National Clean Energy Week

By SKYLEE SANTOS  
santosskylee@gmail.com  
CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI is making big strides toward a cleaner, more sustainable energy future. Celebrating these efforts, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang declared Sept 23-27, 2024, as National Clean Energy Week. They are calling residents, businesses, and government offices to recognize the progress the islands have made in clean energy and sustainability.

One of the biggest goals for the CNMI is to reach 100% renewable energy by 2045. The CNMI co-signed the Blue Planet Agreement, joining other islands in fighting climate change. This is also part of the CNMI's 2024 Climate Action Plan, which focuses on cutting down greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation and transportation, two of the biggest sources of pollution in the islands.

Solar energy is the most abundant renewable energy source in the CNMI, and the government has been making major moves to use it. The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is currently building a 20-megawatt solar farm on Saipan, which will be the first large-scale solar farm in the CNMI. This project will reduce the islands' reliance on fossil fuels and help generate clean electricity.

Public institutions are also going solar. The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. started installing solar panels

at hospitals and health centers on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in 2018, and the Public School System followed by installing solar panels at 19 schools and three Head Start centers in 2021. These efforts are helping schools and hospitals switch to cleaner, on-site renewable energy.

The private sector is also doing its part. Some businesses are investing in solar energy, including the largest privately funded solar-covered parking lot at the Marianas Business Plaza. The CNMI's first eclectic vehicle charging station was installed by Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc., and more businesses are using solar panels to power their operations.

Meanwhile, more residents are adding solar technologies to their homes, such as solar water heaters, air conditioning, and full-scale solar power systems. This shows that both businesses and individuals are committed to moving to a cleaner future.

Transportation is also going green in the CNMI. The government is working on electrifying public transit buses, which will help reduce emissions and improve air quality. In 2024, a local nonprofit called 500 Sails launched a fossil fuel-free ocean travel initiative within the Saipan lagoon. This program offers visitors and residents an eco-friendly way to explore the waters while supporting sustainable tourism. The government is

See PALACIOS on Page 4

## Congratulations

to Kwangwon "Dennis" Seo on His New Role!

Kensington Hotel Saipan is delighted to announce Kwangwon "Dennis" Seo as the new General Manager of Kensington Hotel Saipan, effective September 1st, 2024. Dennis brings extensive experience and a strong academic background in hospitality management, having studied in Switzerland and England.

His impressive career includes key roles at E-Land Group, leading major projects like the reopening of the Former Palms Resort and the acquisition of Coral Ocean Point & Golf Club Saipan. As General Manager of Pacific Islands Club Saipan, he earned the prestigious "Best of the Best Hotel" Award by TripAdvisor in 2023.

Dennis has also served as a board director for the Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands since 2022 and was elected Chairman in 2024.

He exemplifies warm heartfelt leadership and a strong belief in teamwork, a service goal-oriented, effective communication, and walk-the-talk reliability are few of his strong foundation traits.

His networking and partnerships with the hotel industry local and regional, governmental agencies, and the community at large are well-received and recognized.

In his new role as Executive Managing Director effective September 1st, 2024, he will oversee the operations of Eland Saipan, which also includes the Kensington Hotel Saipan, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, and Coral Ocean Resort.

Please join us in congratulating Dennis and wishing him all the best in his new journey!

Contact Us  
Kensington Hotel Saipan  
P.O. Box 5152 CHRB, Saipan, MP 96950  
+1 670 322-3311  
reservations@kensingtonsaipan.com  
www.kensingtonsaipan.com





# MVA joins tourism Expo Japan 2024 in Tokyo

The Marianas Visitors Authority joined representatives of other international countries and regions, businesses, and organizations at Tourism EXPO Japan 2024 on Sept. 26-29, in Tokyo, Japan.

Tourism EXPO Japan is organized annually by Japan Travel & Tourism Association, Japan Association of Travel Agents, and Japan National Tourism Organization. This year's expo attracted 182,900 attendees. The expo was held at the Tokyo Big Sight Convention Center and included national tourism agencies, airlines, hotels, travel agencies, cruise companies, other tourism professionals and the traveling public. The MVA joined other exhibitors in providing the latest tourism information to visitors and professional members of the travel trade.

The theme for this year's event was "Travel, an Encounter with New Value Awaits." The first two days of the expo were focused on B2B appointments and walk-in meetings with travel trade and media partners, while the last two days were open to the public. This year, over 71,000 tourism professionals and media reps joined the event on the travel trade days, while an estimated 54,000 consumers joined the final days of the event.

During travel trade days, the MVA conducted B2B meetings with representatives of AEON Compass Co, Ltd, HANKYU Travel International Co., Ltd., NOE Corp., AEON Compass, HIS Co., Ltd., NIHONBASHI-YUMEYA Co., Ltd., TOBU



Marianas Visitors Authority Board member Sachiko Gerrard, seated second left, and managing director Christopher A. Concepcion, standing center, lead the Marianas delegation during Tourism Expo Japan 2024 held on Sept. 26-29, 2024, in Tokyo, Japan. The MVA was joined by representatives of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands and Japan-Saipan Travel Association in promoting the Marianas at the expo.

TOP Tours Co., Ltd., TRACY Japan Inc., Nippon Travel Agency, Travel Plaza International, Inc., JTB Corp, Freelance, Toyota Tourists group, and Skymark Airlines.

"The Marianas' presence at this year's Tourism Expo Japan was strong, with a colorful booth design, our exciting cultural demonstrations drawing a crowd, and representatives of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands and Japan-Saipan Travel Association joining the MVA in promoting our destination," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "The appetite for international travel is still recovering among Japanese and the strength of the U.S. Dollar is still The Marianas' biggest challenge

in attracting visitors from the market. Nonetheless, there was still interest in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, which we know will draw more visitors as soon as market conditions improve."

Indigenous Carolinian dances were performed by Chamolinian Cultural Village Inc. Refaluwasch Domatsuri Warriors drew a crowd to the Marianas booth where the MVA shared information and collaterals about the destination and its tour-

ism resources. The MVA was joined by representatives of JSTA and Aqua Resort Club Saipan, Grandvrio Resort Saipan, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Skydive Saipan, and Saipan World Resort in promoting the destination.

In addition, visitors to the booth participated in indigenous "mwar"-making (floral head lei) and coconut leaves weaving and viewed videos



Members of the public visit the Marianas booth during Tourism Expo Japan 2024 held on Sept. 26-29, 2024, in Tokyo, Japan. The Marianas Visitors Authority—along with representatives of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands and Japan-Saipan Travel Association—joined exhibitors from around world at the expo, which attracted over 182,000 attendees.

about Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and the Northern Islands. In a roulette game, visitors to the booth had a chance to win hotel stay certificates, dive certificates, golf, and waterpark certificates donated by members.

Tourism EXPO Japan provides opportunities for travel professionals to exchange travel information and conduct effective business meetings, while inspiring consumers to travel. This year's Tourism Expo Japan launched the Sustainable Development Goals Stamp Rally Program project to raise awareness of sustainability within the

tourism industry. The SDGs were established with the aim of achieving a sustainable, diverse, and inclusive society where no one is left behind. The MVA participated in the Stamp Rally program by providing eco bags and pencils sets.

Following the expo, MVA representatives also met with major travel agencies and operators JTB, TP Micronesia, and HIS to discuss market conditions and potential strategies to attract more visitors to the Marianas.

United Airlines flies to Saipan in the Marianas three times a week from Tokyo. (PR)

## IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Jamerito Adona Casama	FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION
Petitioner,	NO. 24-0160
vs.	SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION
Yolanda Cruz Casama	
Respondent,	

### TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the Court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is Box 10003 PMB 686 Saipan MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 3rd of October, 2024.

/s/  
Clerk of Court

## TINIAN FUEL SERVICES, INC.

PO Box 520800, Tinian, MP 96952  
Tel. (670) 433-4428 • Fax. (670) 433-4427

**Tinian Fuel Services, Inc.** has an opening for:

### 49-9021 MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN (1)

**Duties:** Inspect, make repairs, and test machinery or equipment (such as freezers, chillers, air conditioners, and ice cream machines) to diagnose machine malfunctions. Perform routine preventive maintenance to ensure that machines continue to run smoothly, building systems operate efficiently, and the physical condition of the building/facility does not deteriorate.

**Qualifications:** Required to have minimum of a high school diploma degree and 24 months of work experience with previous work-related skills, equipment maintenance, repairing, troubleshooting and detail-oriented.

**Worksite Location:** San Jose Village, Tinian; Salary: \$10.06 to \$15.00/Hour; Work Hours: Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm; Overtime Available at 1.5 x base rate/Hour; Frequency of Pay: Bi-Weekly; Deductions: All applicable CNMI and Federal Taxes including FICA and Withholding Tax; Benefits: Worker's Compensation Offered.

**Closing Date:** October 19, 2024

Applicants may submit their resume personally (walk-in) at our office located in San Jose Village, Tinian Tel No.: (670) 433-4428 or by emailing us their resume at [service@tinianservice.com](mailto:service@tinianservice.com). Applicants may apply during weekdays only, Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm, excluding national holidays.

## ARMATECH

Wireless WIFI Antenna Installer and Repairer  
Tel: (670) 234-8895 / Email: [armatech.saipan@gmail.com](mailto:armatech.saipan@gmail.com)  
Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895



## COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION



### INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-24-027

#### ISLAND WIDE ROAD RESTORATION, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Island Wide Road Restoration, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity work consists of excavation, placing of flowable fill and asphalt to replace pavement areas cut by CUC to repair waterlines. Payment is only for the items completely installed and accepted by CUC and DPW. The duration of the contract is one year (365 calendar days) from date of award with an option to extend for an additional year if exercised by CUC.

The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **October 10, 2024 at 9:30 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference, Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and seven (7) hard copies** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Island Wide Road Restoration" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on October 28, 2024** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of the Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualifications shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on October 11, 2024** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email, [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Rodolfo Rodriguez, Water and Wastewater Division Manager via email, [rodolfo.rodriguez@cucgov.org](mailto:rodolfo.rodriguez@cucgov.org) and Marcela Tenorio, P&S Senior Administrative Technician, via email [marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org](mailto:marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

**BETTINA G. TERLAJE**  
Acting Executive Director

**MANNY B. SABLAN**  
Purchasing Administrator



PROBE

From page 1

“Based on the overall findings, we found that the vehicle had developed mechanical problems that morning. The findings were made by a certified mechanic using a diagnostic instrument. Looking into the problems of the vehicle, we found that one of the errors that was found was connected to the proper function of the air-conditioning unit,” Macaranas said during a media conference at DPS headquarters last Friday.

When asked if the police cars were often checked and maintained Macaranas responded, “The officer performs a daily check on the vehicles. You know, that’s the standard practice for every officer is to check

out the police vehicle. It’s beyond the officer’s ability to know if the vehicle, if that such component is problematic, because if it does, then, you know, we could’ve prevented this tragedy. So again, yes, the officer did a check on the vehicle prior before leaving the headquarters to perform their job.”

Macaranas added, “The officer assured that when they left the vehicle, the air-condition was properly running, the vehicle was secure so that nobody can tamper or open the door, and of course the vehicles...it’s an early morning, they went in to process their evidence and turn in everything and when they came out, and that’s what happened. So that’s the thing that I said earlier, that the problem of the vehicle was internally, that’s beyond the officer’s capability of finding if the vehicle was problematic.”

He also shared that the two K-9 handlers are currently undergoing counselling.

“This is, like I said, tragic. For all people that are [out there], I understand that they care and they love the dogs, but myself and the department, too, feel saddened with the loss of these two dogs.”

As current policies go, everything was followed by the two K-9 handlers, according to Macaranas.

“The two officers were then transferred over to patrol to continue their police work. But at the same token, they were going through counseling to help them cope with the loss of their partners. The transfer is not a means of discipline. It’s a means that they will return back to their normal duty because K-9 is a specialized unit. You need to be trained to

be there, but they’re back there. But again, we’re still looking forward to the well-being of their health because of what has happened. But we will continue to look into the policies and the protocols of the K-9 [unit] so we can make more improvements and see what other avenues to prevent this tragic incident.”

Macaranas takes full responsibility for the incident and shared that as a department, DPS is currently seeking to change some policies to not only prevent the incident from happening again, but take better care of their K-9 officers.

“It’s part of the policy, again, we’re going to have to look in and see how can we enhance it more where now the dogs will be more freely moving instead of being inside the vehicle. That’s one of the policies we’re look-

ing at to make any changes so that way we will not incur this kind of tragedy again. As far as the canine vehicle, there is a specific vehicle configuration for canine vehicle, which consists of a kennel-type vehicle with air-con on the window, temperature monitoring system inside the vehicle to include a water dispenser where you dispense water to have the dogs to constantly be drinking a lot of water. There was a plan, at one point, before the department back in 2022 that there is four to be procured. Unfortunately, for some reason, they did not proceed with that. So that left out that we’re using the regular patrol vehicles,” he said.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

WATSON

From page 1

Arnold I. Palacios for a state of emergency declaration regarding power generation in the CNMI.

Last Friday, CUC held an emergency board meeting to address Watson’s request for the board to ask Palacios to issue an emergency declaration regarding power generation in Saipan and Rota.

Currently, the procurement of new generator units critically needed to replace older units on Saipan and Rota is pending an appeals process and is subject to protest. An emergency declaration by the governor would mean Palacios would be authorized to take necessary measures to address the emergency situation.

However, after over an hour of discussion in executive decision, the board denied the request.

Watson, in an alarming letter to the board, stated that there is an urgent and escalating risk that the CUC may soon be unable to provide continuous and reliable electrical services to the islands of Saipan and Rota due to circumstances beyond its control.

Watson explained that the emergency was caused by catastrophic failures that occurred in September and October 2023, on Rota and Saipan, respectively.

“On Oct. 19, 2023, for the island of Saipan, Diesel Engine No. 1 experienced an emergency shutdown due to an engine frame crack causing lube oil leakage. This emergency shutdown caused the power generation capacity to decrease by 10 megawatts. The engine failure left Saipan’s power generation capacity in a critically low state, with little to no reserve power generation capacity available should another large-sized diesel engine fail or conduct

scheduled maintenance. Rota power plant’s diesel engine Cummins No. 4 experienced catastrophic failure on Sept. 13, 2023, due to a connecting rod piercing the engine block on both sides of the engine, leading to a crankcase explosion. Rota’s power plant’s Caterpillar diesel engine was energized but experienced an emergency shutdown due to an unusual knocking sound from the engine and release of heavy white smoke. The engine failure caused the power generation reserve capacity to decrease by 2 megawatts. The engine failures left Rota’s power generation capacity in a critically low state, with little to no reserve power generation capacity available for emergency shutdown or even for scheduled maintenance,” he said.

To address issues faced by both power plants, Watson explained that CUC issued two requests for propos-

als in February 2024 to procure new generators for the power plants in Saipan and Rota with a submission deadline of March 19, 2024.

On June 7, 2024, CUC issued a notice of intent to award, as well as a notification of non-award letters for both RFPs.

However, on June 17, 2024, CUC received protest letters for both RFPs from one of the proposers, initiating a formal protest process under § 50-50-401 of CUC’s procurement regulations.

“These protests have effectively stalled the procurement process, preventing CUC from advancing the critical upgrades required to ensure reliable power generation on Saipan and Rota,” he said.

Meanwhile, on Sept. 30, the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission voted to table the decision on procurement filings for the purchase of the new generators indicating that they would continue to table the decision until the protests and appeals

were resolved, even though the appeals could go up to the NMI Superior Court and even the NMI Supreme Court and take years to resolve.

“Saipan and Rota cannot afford to go without new generators for another 3-5 years. Chairman [James S.] Sirok suggested that CUC should just overhaul the existing engines while the protests are pending. I have indicated above the catastrophic failures of these engines. Such failures cannot be repaired simply by overhauling them. Due to the age of the engines, they are obsolete, and parts are no longer available. Prior experience has shown that even if the parts can be customized. it would take years. CUC cannot reasonably allow such a large looming risk of power loss to the peoples of Saipan and Rota,” he said.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

BILL

From page 1

cannabis industry reform initiative, says that while the passage of House Bill 23-50 is great, it’s lacking.

“First, it’s great and about time, as the deletion of marijuana testing was in the first draft of the bill that I wrote for the 19th Senate. The [Commonwealth] Cannabis Commission, director, and staff were also supposed to have been temporary just to get the industry started as an ‘experiment to be re-evaluated in five years,’ In my original draft, the cannabis industry was supposed to have eventually been ‘self-driven’ once the industry was up and running like all the other business operations like the hotel industry that’s united to promote their hotels and even events that will bring visitors. So, for me, the bill falls far short in addressing all the needs to augment or reform the cannabis tourism industry. Presently, it is virtually a two-person operation with only a director and secretary which is far too insufficient to run an entire industry, which is why we are losing money,” he said.

Bennett said for the reform to be successful, other laws pertaining to cannabis need to be revisited or even deleted.

“There are also other laws that

need to be deleted like the fee of \$75 for people to grow their own marijuana is only making criminals given nearly half of our society is at or below the poverty level, as it should be free like it was in Oregon when I wrote the draft. Growers are also transporting large amounts to the dispensaries with no kind of legal standing to transport in the law. In fact, there are no laws covering the misuse of marijuana on the books for the Office of the Attorney General to prosecute after nearly six years. The local style of doing things ‘little by little’ is not going to get us to economic prosperity because we need to make a giant leap to fix everything wrong with our economic engine that is not running,” he said.

Bennett further states that the CNMI is spending more to run the industry than it brings in revenues, therefore the CNMI must institute reform.

“I recently proved the CNMI can save over \$300,000 that is now being paid mostly to the Cannabis Commission, and how the CNMI could earn the over \$200,000 that are being collected in licenses, fees, and taxes. Genuine reforms to fix our economy is the only cure that will be prescribed by any real economist worth their title,” he said.

Last week, Palacios wrote to Senate President Edith Delon Guerrero (D-Saipan) and House Speaker Ed-

mund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) informing the Legislature that he has signed H.B. 23-50 and it is now Public Law 23-27.

Public Law 23-27 basically removes marijuana from all pre-employment drug testing for government employees with certain exceptions.

Rep. Diego Vincent F. Camacho (D-Saipan), who is the principal author of the bill, also said the intent of the legislation really is just to be in line with Public Law 20-66, the Taulamwaar Sensible CNMI Cannabis Act of 2018.

Public Law 20-66 authorized the personal, medicinal, and commercial use of cannabis/marijuana.

Camacho said the pre-employment matter was not addressed in Public Law 20-66.

“Really the intent of this legislation is for the initial drug testing, anything after that is on the employee or the employer,” he said.

Camacho said the legislation also addresses that any position that is federally funded, even partially, will be the exception to include positions that are safety sensitive.

He said it also authorizes the director of Office of Personnel Management to identify these positions.

The passage of P.L. 23-27 comes after Palacios announced his plans for a cannabis tourism industry reform.

BODY

From page 1

found at an advanced state of decomposition.

According to DPS assistant chief of police and acting public information officer Simon T. Manacop, the body belonged to a Filipino male, but the Criminal Investigation Bureau is still working on positive identification.

Manacop shared that DPS learned from a witness that she arrived at the two-story building just behind RJ Li-

quor to clean and smelled foul odor.

“She followed scent and found the body behind the building,” he said.

Manacop shared that DPS learned that the deceased was last seen and reportedly made contact with a witness four days ago. He also added that DPS learned that the deceased was residing in the shack he was found in. As of now the cause of death is undetermined.

The case remains open as investigators continue to gather additional evidence. DPS also encourages anyone with information that will help the case to come forward.

PALACIOS

From page 2

also encouraging people to save energy. Thanks to a \$3.1-million grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Saipan Mayor’s Office is helping replace old, inefficient lights with new LED lights across the island. This project is expected to cut carbon emissions by 12,000 metric tons per year. The Department of Public Works is also promoting the use of Energy Star-certified products, which can help lower energy use and save money.

The CNMI is also looking at how renewable energy can be used in waste

management. In 2022 and 2024, the Office of Planning and Development conducted a study to see how solar power with battery storage could be used at the Marpi landfill on Saipan. They are now trying to get funding to implement the project and have plans to expand to waste management facilities on Tinian and Rota.

With these efforts, the CNMI is taking big steps toward a sustainable and clean energy future. Island residents, businesses, and government offices are being encouraged to keep supporting the transition to renewable energy. These changes will help the islands reduce pollution, create jobs, and ensure a healthier environment for future generations.



## AHEAD OF DIGITAL PRESERVATION LABS

## NMHC announces public access to historic records on Digital Archive

As part of executive director Leo Pangelinan's legacy and vision, the Northern Marianas Humanities Council has officially announced its Digital Archive in celebration of Humanities Month in the CNMI.

The website at [archives.nmhcouncil.org](http://archives.nmhcouncil.org) allows access to tens of thousands of various types of records the council has accumulated through all the research, programming, events and publications that are part of its mission to navigate the human experience of the diverse and indigenous peoples of the Marianas. Ar-

chive content is organized into collections according to their origin which may include military archives, the National Archive, the Micronesian Area Research Center, the CNMI Archives, or any number of private contributions, such as the collections of archaeologist Alexander Spoehr or retired Peace Corps volunteer Kit Porter Van Meter.

The council's Archives & Records Team continues to research and confirm any data missing from records, as many records were acquired without accompanying information.

But archive visitors are encouraged to become registered users for free, which will enable them to comment any information they can confirm about each record. Another advantage of becoming a registered user is the ability to upload your own digitized content.

Several private collections have already been inaugurated by images and artifacts commemorating historic moments in the Marianas history including the Pangelinan Obo Collection, the Pândan Collection, and the Pride Marianas Collection.

"I encourage everyone to create a digital collection that preserves photos and records of family and the stories that have been passed down by our elders," said Pangelinan.

The public is invited to participate in the ART's Digital Preservation Labs to be held on Saipan, Luta (Rota), and Tinian where tools and technology are provided to digitize content to be uploaded into the Digital Archive. The first Digital Preservation Lab will be held at the council office in Springs Plaza on Saturday, Oct. 19, from 10am to 3pm.



**RACQUEL FLOYD**  
Northern Marianas Humanities Council executive director Leo Pangelinan makes his welcome remarks during the proclamation signing designating October as CNMI Humanities Month last week at the San Vicente Roundhouse.

Interested participants should call (670) 235-4788 or email [info@nmhcouncil.org](mailto:info@nmhcouncil.org) for a 30-minute appointment and prepare several items they wish to create digital records of to be available on the Digital Archive.

More information and demonstrations of the Digital Archive are available on the council's YouTube channel, social media and web page, [nmhcouncil.org](http://nmhcouncil.org). (PR)

## 2024 Toys for Tots Commences in CNMI

Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz is proud to announce the start of the eighth Toys for Tots campaign in the CNMI. With a partnership between the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, First Lady Wella Foundation with the Office of the Governor, Associated Students of Northern Marianas College, and Rota Chamber of Commerce toy collection boxes will be placed at local businesses and government offices during the first week of October. Toy collection will conclude the first week of December.

Last year 4,227 toys, stocking stuffers and books were collected across the CNMI, going to children in need and

spreading a message of happiness and hope during the holiday season. At the conclusion of the campaign, toys from Saipan were also sent to the mayor's offices of Tinian and Rota with the help of Star Marianas Air, Inc. Toys were also given to Karidat Foundation, Division of Youth Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Talaabwoh Stars Youth Center, and CNMI Early Intervention Program.

"I'm excited for this year's Toys for Tots campaign," said Col. Ernest Govea, MCB Camp Blaz commanding officer. "The Campaign is something we prepare for all year, and our Blaz Marines and

Sailors are looking forward to working alongside our community partners to make this year a success. Last year we had a record-breaking year, and I know this year is going to be just as successful."

The Toys for Tots Campaign relies on widespread support and through the generous contributions of individuals, businesses, and communities. The 2024 campaign encourages everyone to get involved, whether through toy donations or serving as a donation location.

"Let's bring hope, joy, and

smiles to a child in need during this Christmas!" said Wella Palacios, CNMI first lady. "This season, please bring joy to a child's holiday by participating in our Toys for Tots donation drive! We're collecting new, unwrapped toys for children ages 2-17 who are in need. Your generosity can make a big difference."

"The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is excited to commemorate 10 years of partnership with the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz for the Toys for Tots campaign. Since 2014, we have collaborated to spread joy and holiday smiles to the children of the Marian-

as, and we are looking forward to this year's campaign," said Kimm Camacho, Chamber executive director. "In light of the current economic challenges, we recognize that this holiday season may be difficult for many families, and we are grateful for the chance to bring some happiness during these tough times."

To participate and donate to Toys for Tots, bring a newly purchased, unwrapped toy to one of the many businesses or organizations who have volunteered to be drop-off locations. For a complete list of locations and important dates, please contact the Chamber at

(670) 234-7150 or visit their Facebook page @SPNChamber. For more information about MCB Camp Blaz's Toys for Tots Campaign please contact Capt. Ryan West at (671) 355-8080 or email [ryan.west@usmc.mil](mailto:ryan.west@usmc.mil).

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is a not-for-profit charity with a 77-year history. Last year the Marine Toys for Tots Program fulfilled the holiday hopes and dreams of 10.3 million less fortunate children in over 800 communities nationwide by distributing 25.5 million toys, books, and games. For more information, visit [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org). (PR)

## Road construction at Outer Cove Marina

The National Park Service, which administers the American Memorial Park, is asking for the community's patience as work progresses to replace the shoreline barrier at Outer Cove Marina.

Construction of the new rock revetment at the east end is nearing completion. On Oct. 8, work will begin on repairs to the road near slips D2-12 to D2-32. The road will remain open, but access will be limited to a single lane and some of the parking in that area will be unavailable. Large trucks and buses should avoid entering the construction zone. Construction in that area should be completed by the weekend, depending on weather and other unavoidable delays.

Construction of the first section of the new rock revetment along the Smiling Cove channel is also nearing completion. Work will then shift to the south and end near the transient docks. Boaters are asked to reduce their speed significantly in the construction zone. A new sidewalk and swale will be constructed along the road leading to Outer Cove to improve drainage during storms and provide a

safe walking path to the marinas. Completion of the entire project is projected for the spring of 2025. (PR)

**JOE HILL**  
HILL LAW OFFICE  
P.O. Box 500917  
Saipan, MP 96950  
Tel: (670) 234-7743/6806  
Fax: (670) 234-7753  
E-mail: [vesta@pticom.com](mailto:vesta@pticom.com)

Attorney for Plaintiff Juliana C. Samonte

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR  
THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

JULIANA C. SAMONTE } Civil Action No.  
Plaintiff, } 22-0224-CV  
-vs- }  
SUNG HUN SON, } **NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Defendant. }  
} Date: November 12, 2024  
} Time: 1:30 p.m.  
} Judge: Hon. Lillian  
} Ada Tenorio

**TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT:**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that Plaintiff Juliana C. Samonte, through counsel Joe Hill, request and moves the Court to strike Defendant's Answer dated November 22, 2022 filed in this matter, and declare Defendant Sung Hun Son in default.

The hearing on Plaintiff's Motion to Strike Defendant's Answer dated November 22, 2022 and Declare Defendant in Default dated August 30, 2024 ("Motion") has been set for Nov. 12, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard before the Honorable Lillian Ada Tenorio, Associate Judge of the above-named Court.

A copy of the said Motion is available for review at the Office of the Clerk of Court of the said Court. SIGNED this 10th day of September, 2024.

PATRICK V. DIAZ  
Clerk of Court

By:  
/s/  
Deputy Clerk of Court

## WANTED: CORRESPONDENTS

*Hafa Adai!*

**Saipan Tribune**  
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

is looking for correspondents.

**Qualifications:**

- Passion for writing
- Always wants to be in the know
- Has a nose for news
- Comfortable with interviewing people
- Team player

**Perks**

- Not a boring 9am - 5pm job
- You'll meet a lot of people
- You'll learn (almost) everything under the sun
- A job in journalism also opens doors to bigger and better things

No writing work experience? We are willing to train!  
Email your application and résumé to Akira Kadokura at [akira\\_kadokura@tanholdings.com](mailto:akira_kadokura@tanholdings.com) or drop them off at the HR office on the second floor of the JP Center building in Garapan, Saipan.



# Opinion

Hafa Adai!

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 200

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

**Mark Rabago** EDITOR  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

### EDITORIAL

## Helene's 500 miles of wreckage and devastation should bring howls of fury at leaders' folly

**T**he storms speak and their voices are growing more violent, more vehement.

This storm—Helene—may be the most furious yet. It raked glancing blows through the Caribbean and along Mexico's coast before slamming into Florida's Big Bend at Category 4, with 140 mph sustained winds that tore buildings into scraps of wood and plaster. Devastating storm surges along Florida's entire west coast sent up to 15 feet of filthy water into homes and businesses, washing away lifetimes and for some, lives.

But the storm's fury did not abate. As Helene moved into Georgia, Atlanta faced its first-ever flash flood emergency as torrential rain pelted down, sending major water bodies surging over their banks throughout the state and adding to the millions without power. But the most devastating impacts might be in North Carolina, where Helene ravaged the historic city of Asheville and left thousands of residents stranded with no power, no roads and few means of communication. Helene's 500-mile path of destruction destroyed structures and claimed lives in South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee as well. Millions are without power.

The storm's deepest gouges manifested in lives lost: CNN is reporting more than 100 dead as of Monday morning, and hundreds more are unaccounted for.

The names of the dead are largely unknown right now, but they are part of Helene's furious howl.

Global, national and state leaders must recognize at long last that the world's climate cares nothing for political fiction. The world's seas are growing warmer. Ice floes are melting. Sea levels are rising. Florida, flat and surrounded by water, is just the harbinger. Unusually violent storms, including blizzards and tornadoes, are manifesting with greater frequency. Communities along both seaboards and in the nation's river deltas are seeing sunny-day flooding. In many ecosystems, the balance between prey and predator is being thrown off-balance by a lack of places for fish to spawn or prairie to roam.

Human beings may not be the sole cause of this global upheaval. But they are the only ones with the ability and the ingenuity to stop or at least slow the damage. Without drastic, responsible action, we are facing storms that could make Helene's fury fade into memory.

That's why Floridians should look at this storm's destruction—and become enraged. Earlier this summer, they learned of an initiative that would strip mention of concepts such as climate change from state textbooks. It's a far cry from six years ago, when Gov. Ron DeSantis spoke of "resiliency" as the No. 1 priority of his administration, and promised to fight for responsible stewardship of land and water.

There are other things to be angry about. In the coming months, we suspect it will become obvious that many of the people who suffered devastating losses will have no insurance policies to fall back on—especially seniors on fixed incomes who could not afford the premiums that state leaders have allowed to spiral out of control. They will also hear assessments

See HELENE on Page 7



## Why backlash to Trump could spark the 'Fourth Founding'

**I**t has been a long night of terror for American pluralism and democracy. The Republican Party since 2016 has burrowed ever deeper into authoritarian terrain. You don't have to be a political scientist to register that reality. Democratic political parties aren't awash in lies and they don't nominate criminals and coup plotters to leadership. Not so complicated, really.

Trumpism is a daily assault on many targets, including basic decency. But among them is optimism. When lies are common currency, and democratic values and practices are under persistent assault, it's easy to feel despondent about the future. That's why talk of a "Fourth Founding" can be both a compelling exercise of imagination and a momentary balm for political anxiety.

The great American historian Eric Foner cast Reconstruction as the nation's "Second Founding," when the Constitution was remade after the Civil War to expand liberty to Black Americans. Others applied that template to the Civil Rights era. In burying Jim Crow and enshrining rights in the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, the U.S. finally realized democracy in the mid-1960s—the Third Founding. (The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which opened the nation to immigrants from Asia and other formerly restricted regions, had its own profound influence on American pluralism.)

Each of those breakthroughs was preceded by crisis—the Civil War in the 19th century and the Massive Resistance of White supremacists in the 20th century. Is it possible that the authoritarian crisis embodied by MAGA could ultimately trigger another breakthrough—a Fourth Founding?

"I think we have the opportunity to do that here, hopefully sooner rather than later," said Ian Bassin, executive director of Protect Democracy. "Or at least we can if we do our part."

A Fourth Founding would consist of both enhanced rights for voters—a constitutional right to vote, for example, which has never existed. And structural changes to reform anti-democratic practices. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in a report on "reinventing American democracy for the 21st century," called for a range of actions, including enlarging the House of Representatives, with smaller districts, to bolster connections between representatives and their constituents, and imposing 18-year term limits on Supreme Court justices.

Some pro-democracy groups support reforms such as ending the U.S.'s winner-take-all, first-past-the-post elections. They encourage multi-member legislative districts and fusion voting to enable smaller parties to wield influence and mitigate the polarization of a two-party contest for power. Legislation to curtail extreme gerrymandering and other power grabs would bolster the fairness of elections and representation—as well as likely perceptions of fairness.

Even in the light of a prospective post-crisis dawn, however, some democratic efforts might be more than American politics

By FRANCIS WILKINSON

Bloomberg Opinion

Francis Wilkinson is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering U.S. politics and policy. Previously, he was executive editor for the Week and a writer for Rolling Stone.



can manage. In an email, Stanford University historian Jack Rakove cites the inequality of the U.S. Senate, where residents of small states exercise more power than residents of large states. The problem, vexing enough to James Madison and other Founders when it was written into the Constitution, has ballooned due to lopsided population growth. In the Senate, residents of Wyoming, population 580,000, smaller than the unrepresented District of Columbia, now have 67 times the power of residents of California, population 39 million. "I bring a kind of Madisonian caution to bear, mostly because I wonder how we would avoid the challenge that undermined a couple of (Madison's) key objectives in 1787," Rakove writes. "My initial fear, then, is that we might face the same dilemma at another 'Founding' moment, with no ready way to resolve it."

Given the antipathy that characterizes current politics, and a widespread lack of faith in both institutions and partisan opponents, it's hard to imagine how we break into the promised land of a Fourth Founding without first engendering civic renewal. "There will need to be some sort of civic spiritual revival that is not about government laws and policies," Bassin said, while noting that "there are government laws and policies that could help enable it."

One such policy is national service, with a goal of fostering common ground among youth from different socio-economic statuses, regions and races. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences report called for a national service program "to inspire a culture of commitment to American constitutional democracy and one another."

There may be tension, however, between the desire for a Fourth Founding and the desire for a less contentious political culture. Both Reconstruction and the Civil Rights eras proceeded not from national comity but from brutal conflict culminating in the abject defeat of the most racist and reactionary elements in the nation.

It is good to dream—and plan—of what might be when democracy's crisis gives way to a better day. Meantime, the crisis continues. MAGA, undefeated, is vying for greater power. A Fourth Founding will have to wait until more urgent matters are resolved.



**EDITORIAL POLICY** Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

# Voter purges are disenfranchisement in disguise

**A**ggressive purging of voter rolls has become the new brag among Republican governors—one that should trigger alarm bells about who is being disenfranchised by these actions.

Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt is among the latest, boasting that he has stripped 450,000 Oklahomans from his state’s voter registry since 2021. That’s a state of 4 million, now with just 2.3 million registered voters.

In August, Texas Governor Greg Abbott touted his removal of 1.1 million voters from his state’s rolls, crediting what he said were strong election laws. In addition to those who were removed because they were deceased or had moved, more than 460,000 registered voters, according to Abbott’s office, were placed on a suspension list. In Texas, that can happen if you fail to vote in just two consecutive election cycles.

And North Carolina officials announced last week that they had purged 747,000 registered voters within the last 20 months. According to the State Board of Elections, most removed were ineligible because they had moved within the state and failed to register their new address or had not voted in the previous two federal elections. However, North Carolina Republicans recently filed a suit against the state, claiming it had not taken action on complaints about ineligible voters.

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 requires states to take reasonable measures to cull voter lists regularly, weed-ing out those no longer qualified. That’s a good thing that helps ensure a smooth count on Election Day. It’s also routine maintenance that, until recently, was conducted with little fanfare.

But some states may be crossing the line from tidying up rolls to straight disenfranchisement of certain voters for more nefari-ous purposes.

The rate of purges has already caught the attention of the U.S. Justice Department over concerns that federal rules are being violated. Democracy Docket, which tracks election litigation, has noted three dozen cases in 19 states related to the maintenance of voter rolls. On Friday, the Justice Department announced that it had filed a lawsuit against Alabama and its secretary of state,

alleging the state violated federal law by removing voters from its rolls too close to the November election.

In Nevada, the Republican National Committee and the Trump campaign are suing Nevada Secretary of State Francisco Aguilar, accusing him of failing to purge more than 6,000 citi-zens from state voter rolls. They’re seeking a court order requir-ing Aguilar, a Democrat, to verify the citizenship of all voters before the election—a virtually impossible task at this late date.

All voters are already required to attest under penalty of per-jury that they are U.S. citizens, but that hasn’t stopped Republi-cans from pushing for further verification, including proof of citi-zenship. Earlier this year, a network of Trump allies challenged thousands of registrations in battleground states, some of which targeted Democratic areas, according to the New York Times.

That’s disturbing enough, but the overall rate of voter roll purges has been ramping up at a pace that should alarm Ameri-cans. Between 2020 and 2022, it jumped 21% from 2014-2016, according to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. More than 19 million voters were removed.

In Oklahoma, more than 40%—just under 195,000—of the purged voters fell in the “inactive” category. Often, such occa-sional voters don’t discover until Election Day that they have been removed from the rolls, long past registration deadlines.

State Representative Mauree Turner, a Democrat, said the lat-est Oklahoma removal numbers are cause for dismay, not cel-ebration, as Stitt contends. “My first thought is how many people are in there that have been purged and don’t know that they’ve been purged,” Turner said. “All this is going to do is discourage people who are already less inclined to show up to the polls any-way in a deeply red state.”

Oklahoma had the lowest voter turnout in the country in 2020, when just 54.4% of the eligible population voted, according to statistics compiled by the University of Florida’s Election Lab. In fact, Oklahoma has had some of the lowest voter turnout in the country for the past four presidential elections, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

Too little research has been done on the possible correlation

By **PATRICIA LOPEZ**

Bloomberg Opinion



*Patricia Lopez is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering politics and policy. She is a former member of the editorial board at the Minneapolis Star Tribune, where she also worked as a senior political editor and reporter.*

between aggressive voter roll purges and turnout, but a piece published earlier this month in Social Science Quarterly exam-ined Michigan voter rolls between 2014 and 2018, geocoding exact addresses where voters were dropped.

The report’s initial conclusion was that “more Democratic-leaning areas, denser/more urban areas, and areas with more Black residents had higher rates of purges.” Racial makeup and median income “remained a significant factor in voter purge rates and, the researchers concluded, “suggest a potentially trou-blesome underlying element” in the pattern of purges.

As with everything else in this hyper-polarized country, we are divided into states that see voting as a right to be extended as broadly as possible and those who see it as a privilege to be limited in any way officials see fit.

Voter fraud is rare in this country, partly because election systems are decentralized. There is no national voter registry to manipulate. Even the conservative Heritage Foundation—yes, the folks responsible for Project 2025—looked at electoral fraud cases in the U.S. between 1979 and 2023 and found just 1,465 proven cases of fraud, or about 33 a year across the country.

We must take reasonable precautions to preserve election integrity. But the higher objective should be ensuring that ev-ery American eligible to vote can participate in this ritual, which is so fundamental to a healthy democracy, without un-necessary barriers.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Critical questions

Dear CNMI community,

As we approach the general elections, it is crucial to reflect on the current state of our Commonwealth and evaluate the actions taken by both past and present administrations. Equally impor-tant is the need to hold our Senators, House of Representatives, and new candidates accountable for the plans they present mov-ing forward.

In light of this, I have compiled several critical questions that demand clear and honest answers. These questions address signifi-cant issues such as the financial health of our government, staffing decisions, and the transparency of public fund management. I en-courage all candidates—incumbents and new contenders alike—to address these concerns as we prepare to cast our votes:

- 1. Efforts to end austerity:**  
What specific steps has your administration or political party tak-en to what the austerity measures in place when you assumed office?  
How have these actions impacted the government’s overall financial health and the delivery of public services?
- 2. Personnel changes:**  
Upon taking office, how many individuals were removed from government positions, and what was the rationale behind these decisions?  
Were these changes aligned with your administration’s vi-sion, and were new hires fully budgeted, or did you rely on

- contractors to fill gaps?
- 3. New hires:**  
How many new hires have been made since you took office, and how have these appointments affected the efficiency and productivity of government operations?
- 4. Hiring of unqualified individuals:**  
Have you made personnel adjustments to hire individuals who did not meet standard qualifications? If so, what was the justifi-cation, and how has this affected government performance and service delivery?  
Can OPM director Joseph Pangelinan provide a report on how many employees with criminal records or past terminations due to adverse actions have been hired since you took office?
- 5. Cabinet member travel:**  
Can you provide a detailed account of the travel conducted by you, your cabinet members, and legislators? What were the purposes of these trips, and how have they benefited the Com-monwealth?
- 6. Legislative priorities and cohesion:**  
Given the ongoing concerns about infighting within the Leg-islature, what actions are being taken to ensure that lawmakers focus on addressing public needs rather than engaging in internal disputes?
- 7. ARPA funds allocation:**  
It has been nearly two years since the receipt of ARPA funds. Can you offer a transparent update on how these funds have been allocated, and what tangible progress has been made in address-ing critical issues in the Commonwealth?
- 8. Workforce migration:**  
How many residents have left the Commonwealth due to a lack of opportunities or competitive salaries, and what measures are being taken to address this issue?
- 9. Tourism development:**  
What actions have you taken to improve tourism, and how are these efforts contributing to economic recovery?
- 10. Utility prices:**  
What are you doing to address rising power utility costs for residents?
- 11. Food inflation:**  
What are your plans to tackle the rising costs of food and es-sential goods?
- 12. Investigations into corruption:**  
What is the current status of investigations related to the BOOST program and other cases of government corruption? Can you provide a list of cases filed with the Office of the Public Auditor, DPS, and the Office of Attorney General?  
As voters, we bear the responsibility of demanding transpar-ency and accountability from those who seek to lead us. These questions are meant to encourage honest dialogue and ensure that the future of our Commonwealth is shaped by informed and thoughtful decisions.  
Thank you for your time and attention. Let us remain vigilant and committed to holding our leaders accountable.

**Frankie Manglona**  
*Dandan Village*

## HELENE

From page 6

of disaster readiness throughout Florida, and that some commu-nities were still not prepared to deal with a storm this savage, particularly its floodwaters.






But that fury should not distract from the biggest failure of all: The reality that humans are—bit by bit—destroying this world’s

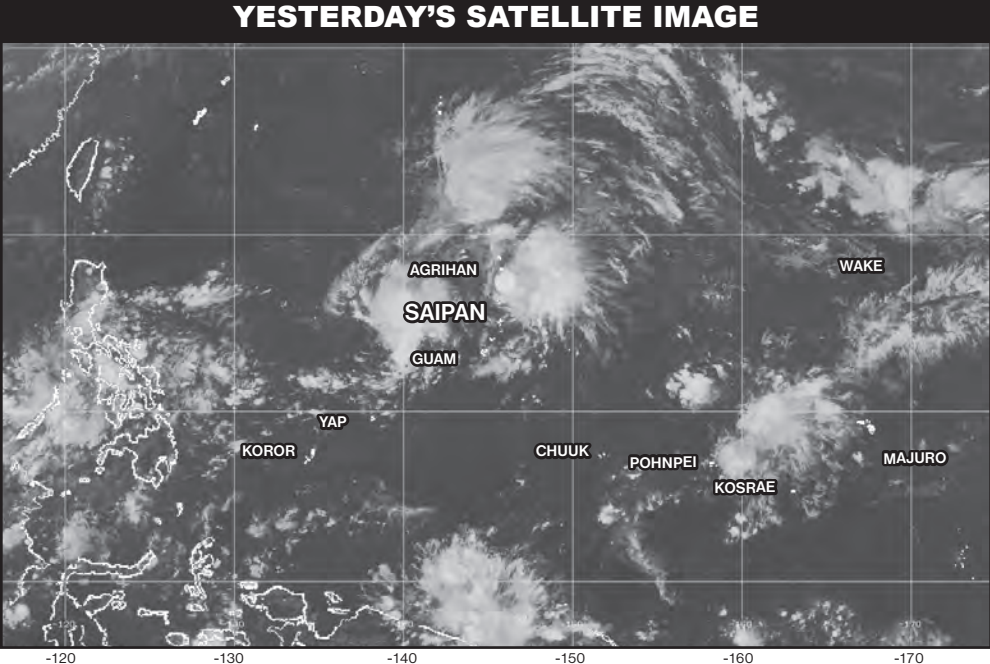
ability to sustain human life. They should hear the howl of na-ture’s fury, though Helene’s wrath has passed. And they should add their own rage-filled demand for change. Until they do, these storms’ fatal price will continue to be paid, again and again—in screaming winds that rip buildings from their foundations, in implacable walls of filthy water, in buckled roads and collapsed bridges, in the terror and devastation of watching communities washed away or buried in mud. In the hopelessness of evacu-ees praying that they still have a home; that their clothing, their

dishes, their favorite couch, the precious pictures of children and grandparents haven’t been reduced to dirty debris. In other mea-sures, such as the extreme heat that is claiming lives across the southern U.S.

Helene, Ian, Katrina, Andrew, Rita, Irma, Michael, Matthew and so many more: Through their deadly winds, driving rains and fatal floods, they are warning us. We are running out of time.

# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. South winds 10 to 15 mph.		Partly sunny with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	
86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°



Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Showers have diminished over much of the Marianas. Invest 99W has mostly moved out of the coastal waters of Saipan and into the coastal waters of Alamagan, Pagan and Agrihan. Winds and seas in the CNMI are expected to diminish as today progresses since most of the sea height was due to wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 77°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	86° / 74°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 77°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 81°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:06 AM	6:04 PM
Saturday	6:07 AM	6:03 PM
Sunday	6:07 AM	6:02 PM
Monday	6:07 AM	6:01 PM
Tuesday	6:07 AM	6:01 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	6:59 AM	6:52 PM	-
Saturday	7:46 AM	7:28 PM	-
Sunday	8:36 AM	8:07 PM	-
Monday	9:28 AM	8:51 PM	-
Tuesday	10:22 AM	9:40 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Sunny	54° / 43°	
Beijing	Sunny	61° / 38°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	87° / 75°	
London	Cloudy	66° / 60°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	83° / 64°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 77°	
Melbourne	Showers	58° / 44°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°	
New York	Cloudy	59° / 49°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	85° / 68°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	70° / 54°	
Busan	Thunderstorms	78° / 63°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	79° / 57°	
Salem	Thunderstorms	78° / 53°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	69° / 57°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	87° / 71°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	83° / 73°	
Washington, DC	Cloudy	54° / 48°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:57 AM	Low Tide	0.01	
10:50 AM	High Tide	1.67	
4:19 PM	Low Tide	1.15	
9:12 PM	High Tide	1.64	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2024							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5	UA825	5:30PM	10:00PM	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily up to Oct 26	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily up to Oct 26
				7C2306/3211	11:10PM	3:30PM+1	Daily from Oct 27
				UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:30AM	6:25AM	Daily from Oct 28	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily up to Oct 26
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily up to Oct 27	7C3211	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily from Oct 27
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily up to Oct 26	TW307	8:00PM	1:30AM+1	Daily up to Oct 27
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily up to Oct 26	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily up to Oct 26
7C3212	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily from Oct 27	7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily up to Oct 26
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
HX77	3:05AM	6:00AM	1, 5	HX76	6:25PM	1:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024									
SAIPAN TO ROTA									
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY				
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily				
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily				
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily				
ROTA TO SAIPAN									
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY				
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily				
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday				
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday				
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily				
ROTA TO GUAM									
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY				
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday				
GUAM TO ROTA									
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY				
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday				
SAIPAN TO TINIAN									
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY				
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily				
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily				
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily				
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily				
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily				
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily				
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily				
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily				
TINIAN TO SAIPAN									
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY				
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily				
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily				
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily				
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily				
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily				
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily				
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily				
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily				

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235.3740. E-mail: [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). Website:[www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

**ADVERTISING** For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: [sales@saipantribune.com](mailto:sales@saipantribune.com)



# Education chief to parents: We want to be better caretakers of your children

The Public School System will keep working toward initiatives, programs, and practices that not only meet the diverse needs of learners, but also emphasize giving parents—a crucial partner in the school district—a sense of ownership and empowerment over their child's learning success. This is done by acknowledging and leveraging the unique role that parents play in their child's educational success.

This was according to Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence F. Camacho during his conversation with the different parent leaders and stakeholders at the recently held 2024 State Level Fall Parent Summit.

In acknowledging the unique role that parents play in their child's educational progress, Camacho believes that it is the incredible strengths of families that will assist the Public School System's work in their child's learning.

"Your PSS will continue to work with you to ensure the sense of ownership and empowerment in the very stakeholders that the school district is designed to serve," Camacho told parents.

"We will continue to create a supportive environment where all voices are valued. This is the beauty of working together, us at PSS and you, our parents, our most valued partners," he said.

The education chief added, "We want to continue to be better caretakers of our children."

Camacho also shared with parents that PSS is a complex organization that seamlessly works with everything: from the various offices at the central office, including the governing body, the Board of Education, down to all 20 elementary, middle, and high schools, including critical programs.

"Every single minute of every day, things are happening in all of our 20 schools and up at the central office. This is a complex work that is done cohesively because we all see the same direction—to serve our students, staff and personnel,



Rota Board of Education member Daniel O. Quitugua delivers his remarks to the state-wide parent summit. This was BOE member Quitugua's first parent summit.

our parents, and the community as a whole," Camacho said.

"The point why we all succeed as one complex organization is because we have your trust and confidence that we take care of your children, that we will be better custodians because of our partnership together," the commissioner pointed out.

## 'Engagement'

Parent Advisory Council president Alyssa Pangelinan said parent summits and events organized by PSS are designed to expand the learning opportunities and engagement of parents.

"There are strategies that us parents need to keep ourselves aware so we can bring them back and share with our families, to our school, and to the community," Pangelinan said in her address.

"We need your continued collaboration with PSS to be able to accomplish its missions, goals and vision," said Pangelinan, who is also the vice principal of Oleai Elementary School.

PSS can do it with your help and support—the support between home and school," she added.

Pangelinan appealed to parents to encourage them by recruiting more parents to participate in school-related activities.

PSS-FECI Program director Liela C. Yumul praised all parent leaders for their commitment to continuously supporting PSS.

"Your presence here is a humbling opportunity for us at PSS, to be able to continuously work with you in our commitment to support the learning and success of your child," Yumul said.

The 2024 State Level Fall Parent Summit was held last Sept. 28 at Aqua Resort Club. With the theme, "Engaging Our Parents as Partners in Education", over a hundred parent leaders representing all of 20 public elementary, middle, high schools, Head Start/Early Head Start Program, and Special Education Programs participated.

The summit is one of the primary events of the school district's Family Engagement and Community Involvement Program of the school district. It was created in the school year 2011-2012 by the Office of the Commissioner of Education and the Federal Programs Office as a result of recognizing the critical role of parents in the overall direction of growth of PSS, through its strategic priorities.

The program is federally funded.

## External support

Camacho also underscored the important of external sup-



Parent leaders in public elementary, middle, and high schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, along with programs, listen to Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence F. Camacho, standing left, as he discusses the vital role parents play in each child's education, development, and success. This took place at Aqua Resort Club last Sept. 28, during the Parent Fall Summit.



Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence F. Camacho talks about the school district's five-year, multi-tiered PSS Strategic Plan.



Celine Orsini of the PSS Accountability, Research and Evaluation presents the "School Accountability Report Card" to parents.

port, as praised the support of House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), who never missed out on any parent activities of the school district. The House leader is a parent leader representing Oleai Elementary School.

The presence of the House leader is a testament of the role of external support in all of PSS' programs and initiatives.

Board of Education Rota member Daniel O. Quitugua also attended the event.

"While it is an honor for us educators, advocates and stakeholders to work with our parents, we are also honored that we continue to receive external support from our leaders, like the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and all of our community leaders," Camacho said.

"On behalf of our Board of Education and Public School System, our great school administrators and school personnel are able to deliver the task expected of us because of the support—external support that we receive from our partners in the government," the commissioner of education said.

Camacho said "both internal and external systems of support" have been key to PSS success.

"From our parents to our partners in the community, you are influencers who encourage our children to continue learning, and help us, at PSS, achieve our goal of learning and succeed in high school, and after high school," Camacho pointed out.

"This is the most important reason why we exist as one school system: our partnership to ensure that our children are successful," added the Education chief. (PR)



Tanapag Middle School and Saipan Southern High School parent leader Fred Fatiolofa discusses the topic "Through the Lens of a Parent, The Portrait of a Graduate" to his peers.



# Nation

AS SHE VISITS N. CAROLINA TO SURVEY HELENE'S AFTERMATH

## Harris pledges ongoing federal support

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris pledged ongoing federal support and praised the “heroes among us” as she visited North Carolina on Saturday in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, her second trip in four days to the disaster zone.

The vice president was in Charlotte one day after a visit to the state by Republican Donald Trump, who is spreading false claims about the federal response to the disaster.

Harris opened her visit by attending a briefing with state and local officials, where she thanked “those who are in the room and those who are out there right now working around the clock.”

She promised federal assistance would continue to flow and added praise for the “strangers who are helping each other out, giving people shelter and food and friendship and fellowship.”

Despite Trump’s claims that the federal response in the state has been “lousy,” Demo-

cratic Gov. Roy Cooper said the state was “deeply grateful for the federal resources that we have. FEMA has been on the ground with us since the very beginning,” he said, referring to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

After her briefing, Harris helped pack toiletries into aid kits at a distribution center, where she met Angelica Wind from hard-hit Asheville, who was there to volunteer with her daughter and a friend even though Wind said her own family was still without power and people were “just surviving.”

“There’s a lot of resilience,” Wind told Harris, adding that, “We want to make sure people don’t forget about us.”

Harris assured her the federal government was “here for the long haul.”

Melissa Funderbunk told Harris about driving a truck carrying assistance to people in remote Morganton, “where people weren’t coming.”

“You are the heroes among us,” Harris said.

Earlier in the week, Har-

ris was in Georgia, where she helped distribute meals, toured the damage and consoled families hard-hit by the storm. President Joe Biden, too, visited the disaster zone. During stops over two days in the Carolinas, Florida and Georgia, Biden surveyed the damage and met with farmers whose crops have been destroyed.

The two have been vocal and visible about the government’s willingness to help, and the administration’s efforts so far include covering costs for all of the rescue and recovery efforts across the Southeast for several months as states struggle under the weight of the mass damage.

In a letter late Friday to congressional leaders, Biden wrote that while FEMA’s Disaster Relief Fund “has the resources it requires right now to meet immediate needs, the fund does face a shortfall at the end of the year.” He also called on lawmakers to act quickly to restore funding to the Small Business Administration’s disaster loan program.

# World

## Israeli bombardment of Lebanon expanded

MASNAAD BORDER CROSSING, Lebanon (AP)—Powerful new explosions rocked Beirut’s southern suburbs late Saturday as Israel expanded its bombardment in Lebanon, also striking a Palestinian refugee camp deep in the north for the first time as it targeted both Hezbollah and Hamas fighters.

Thousands of people in Lebanon, including Palestinian refugees, continued to flee the widening conflict in the region, while rallies were held around the world marking the approaching anniversary of the start of the war in Gaza.

The strong explosions began near midnight after Israel’s military urged residents to evacuate areas in Dahiyeh, the predominantly Shiite collection of suburbs on Beirut’s southern edge. AP video showed the blasts illuminating the densely populated southern suburbs,

where Hezbollah has a strong presence. They followed a day of sporadic strikes and the nearly continuous buzz of reconnaissance drones.

Israel’s military confirmed it was striking targets near Beirut and said about 30 projectiles had crossed from Lebanon into Israeli territory, with some intercepted.

Earlier on Saturday, Israel’s attack on the northern Beddawi camp killed an official with Hamas’ military wing along with his wife and two young daughters, the Palestinian militant group said. Hamas later said another military wing member was killed in Israeli strikes in Lebanon’s eastern Bekaa Valley. The aftermath showed smashed buildings, scattered bricks and stairways to nowhere.

Israel has killed several Hamas officials in Lebanon since the Israel-Hamas war began, in addition to most of the top leadership of the Lebanon-based Hezbollah as fighting has sharply escalated.

At least 1,400 Lebanese, including civilians, medics and Hezbollah fighters, have been killed and 1.2 million driven from their homes in less than two weeks. Israel says it aims to drive the militant group away from shared borders so displaced Israelis can return to their homes.

Iranian-backed Hezbollah, the strongest armed force in Lebanon, began firing rockets into Israel almost immediately after Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack, calling it a show of support for the Palestinians. Hezbollah and Israel’s military have traded fire almost daily.

Last week, Israel launched what it called a limited ground operation into southern Lebanon after a series of attacks killed longtime Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and others. The fighting is the worst since Israel and Hezbollah fought a brief war in 2006. Nine Israeli soldiers have been killed in the ground clashes that Israel says have killed 440 Hezbollah fighters.

## Ukraine downs a Russian warplane and Russia claims gains in the east

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukrainian forces said they shot down a Russian fighter plane on Saturday while Russia claimed it made gains in Ukraine’s east.

The Russian bomber was shot down near the city of Kostiantynivka in the Donetsk province, head of the Kostiantynivka Military Administration Serhiy Horbunov was quoted as saying by Ukraine’s public broadcaster, Suspilne. Photos showed charred remains of an aircraft after it landed on a house that caught fire.

Also in the partially occupied Donetsk province, Russia’s Defense Ministry claimed Saturday that it had taken control of the village of Zhelanne Druhe.

If confirmed, the capture would come three days after Ukrainian forces said they were withdrawing from the front-line town of Vuhledar, some 33 kilometers (21 miles) from Zhelanne Druhe, following a hard-fought two-year defense.

Although unlikely to change the course of the war, the loss of Vuhledar is indicative of Kyiv’s worsening position, in part the result of Washington’s

refusal to grant Ukraine permission to strike targets deep inside Russian territory and preventing Kyiv from degrading Moscow’s capabilities.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Saturday that he will present his “victory plan” at the Oct. 12 meeting of the Ramstein group of nations that supplies arms to Ukraine.

“We will present the victory plan—clear, concrete steps towards a just end to the war. The determination of our partners and the strengthening of Ukraine are what can stop Russian aggression,” he wrote on X, adding that the 25th Ramstein meeting would be the first to take place at the leaders’ level.

Zelenskyy presented his plan to U.S. President Joe Biden in Washington last week. Its contents have not been made public but it is known that the plan includes Ukraine’s membership of NATO and the provision of long-range missiles to strike inside Russia.

Meanwhile, two people died in Russian shelling in Ukraine’s southern Zaporizhzhia region, regional Gov. Ivan Fedorov said.

Commemorate the  
essence of a life well-lived and  
honor the legacy of your loved ones  
with an **Obituary** in the Saipan Tribune.

Our affordable rates include our expert  
design services and a permanent online  
space on the saipantribune.com.

For inquiries, please contact our advertising  
specialists at (670) 235-8747 or  
sales@saipantribune.com

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER



Life & Style

Garth Brooks accused of rape in lawsuit from hair-and-makeup artist

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A woman who says she worked as a hair-and-makeup stylist for Garth Brooks alleged in a lawsuit filed Thursday that he raped her in a Los Angeles hotel in 2019.

The woman does not use her name and goes by Jane Roe in the lawsuit filed in Los Angeles Superior Court. Brooks forcefully denied the allegations in a statement and acknowledged he tried to get a court to stop Thursday's lawsuit from being filed.

The woman says in the lawsuit she had worked for Brooks' wife, country singer Trisha Yearwood, since 1999, and had started also working for Brooks in 2017.

She said the assault occurred when she traveled from Nashville to Los Angeles with Brooks, who was performing with soul singer Sam Moore at a Grammy Awards tribute to Moore in October 2019.



Garth Brooks speaks during a groundbreaking ceremony for the Tennessee Titans new NFL football stadium, Feb. 29, 2024, in Nashville, Tenn.

Brooks normally traveled with an entourage, but the two were alone on his private jet, and he booked just one hotel suite for both of them, the lawsuit says.

The woman alleges that in the suite, he appeared naked in the doorway to the bedroom and raped her.

The suit says that he then

proceeded as though nothing had happened and expected her to do his hair and makeup immediately after.

The woman's lawsuit alleges that earlier in 2019, when she was at Brooks' home, he had appeared naked in front of her, grabbed her hands, and put them on his genitals.

Brooks filed a preemptive

lawsuit in federal court in Mississippi last month, in which both him and the woman are anonymous.

In court filings in that case, the plaintiff, going by John Doe, says the allegations are "wholly untrue," and he first learned of them in July when she threatened to publicly sue him unless he gave her millions of dollars.

He asked a judge to stop the

woman from "intentional infliction of emotional distress, defamation, and false light invasion of privacy."

"For the last two months, I have been hassled to no end with threats, lies, and tragic tales of what my future would be if I did not write a check for many millions of dollars," Brooks' statement said. "It has been like having a loaded gun waved in my face."

Brooks said he filed the case anonymously "for the sake of families on both sides."

"I trust the system, I do not fear the truth, and I am not the man they have painted me to be," his statement concluded.

The woman's suit also says Brooks exposed himself to her many other times and talked about sexual fantasies with her and sent her explicit text messages.

Eminem is going to be a grandfather, he reveals in 'Temporary' music video

Eminem killed off his alter ego Slim Shady with his latest album, but he's making way for a new nickname: Grandpa.

The rapper announced his daughter Hailie Jade is pregnant through a touching music video that is a tribute to their relationship. Home videos dating back to 1999 and photos of the father-daughter duo, along with videos from her May wedding, are underscored by the emotional song "Temporary" in the video released Thursday.

In one clip of a recent home video, his daughter hands Eminem a jersey with the name "Grandpa" emblazoned on the back with the number 1. She also hands him ultrasound photos, and he looks shocked.

The social media influencer confirmed the news of her pregnancy hours after the video was released Thursday, with an Instagram post. "Mom & dad est. 2025," she captioned the post.

Representatives for Eminem, 51, did not immediately



Eminem performs during "Live From Detroit: The Concert at Michigan Central," June 6, 2024, in Detroit.

return requests for comment.

"Temporary," from Eminem's latest album, "The Death of Slim Shady (Coup de Grâce)," is written as a comforting message to his daughter after he dies. "I'm watchin' you right now, baby girl, I vow/I will protect you, your guardian angel," he sings on the track, which was released in July.

The "Lose Yourself" artist has always had a soft spot for his daughter, frequently mentioning her in his songs and

even writing full tributes to her like "Hailie's Song" and "Mockingbird."

In "Mockingbird," a fan favorite, Eminem sings, "What Daddy always tell you? Straighten up, little soldier," a lyric he calls back to in "Temporary."

Jade is Eminem's sole biological daughter, whom he had with his ex-wife Kim Scott. He also adopted two of Scott's daughters from previous relationships. (AP)

Keanu Reeves spins out at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in pro auto racing debut

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Hollywood star Keanu Reeves made his professional auto racing debut on Saturday in an event in which "The Matrix" star spun out at famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Reeves spun into the grass without a collision on the exit of Turn 9 a little more than halfway through the 45-minute race. He re-entered and continued driving, signaling he was uninjured.



Reeves

Reeves, who qualified 31st out of the 35 cars, ran as high as 21st and successfully avoided a first lap crash in Turn 14. Reeves finished 25th.

Reeves, who is 60 years old, is competing at Indianapolis in Toyota GR Cup, a Toyota spec-racing series and a support series for this weekend's Indy 8 Hour sports car event. He has a second race Sunday.

Reeves is driving the No.

92 BRZRKR car, which is promoting his graphic novel "The Book of Elsewhere." He is teammates with Cody Jones from "Dude Perfect."

Reeves has previous racing experience as a former participant in the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach in the celebrity race. Reeves won the event in 2009.

He is scheduled to attend a 30th anniversary screening of "Speed" on Tuesday in Los Angeles alongside his co-star Sandra Bullock.

Handyman's new job could put marriage at risk

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I are both in our mid-50s. Due to a medical issue she has, we rarely have sex. I don't really think about it very often anymore. Meanwhile, I have a friend, "Edie." We have been friends for a good few years now. I met her in my side job as a handyman. She's in her 80s. My wife has met Edie and calls her my "girlfriend" in a joking manner, at least I think so. From time to time, Edie would drop little sexual remarks, which, at first, I never noticed. When I recognized them, I never really thought much about them.

One day recently, Edie was having a bad day and was crying about wanting to feel alive. One thing led to another, and we wound up having sex. Now she has "awakened" and always wants to engage in sex when I see her. Until now, I never cheated on my wife in all the years we have been married, and it weighs on my mind heavily.

I love my wife and don't want to lose her or the relationship we have. I also don't want to ruin the relationship I have with Edie, if that's possible, who is just a good friend and nothing more. Edie's health is starting to get a little touchy and, per her family history, she will live only a few more years. She doesn't really have many friends or family to spend time with her.

Can I keep my wife and my friendship with Edie? Please give me some good advice as I struggle with what to do.

GOOD HUSBAND AND FRIEND

DEAR HUSBAND/FRIEND: Wake up! I have news for you. Since you started servicing Edie, she has become something other than a "good friend," and you have become in a sense her boy toy. If you love your wife, stop the burgeoning affair now before it blows out of control and your wife finds out. If you allow this to continue, your wife will be hurt, and chances are good that your marriage will be destroyed.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My 28-year-old son was killed by a semi in a hit-and-run. We didn't find out for weeks until he was identified by fingerprints. My husband and I were faithful members of a church congregation. Many times, I was in charge of the nursery. For three months prior to the accident, I had been keeping a child for a church member at no charge because her dad was sick with cancer.

When my son was killed, Abby, not one person sent a caserole or even called me. Of course, I didn't go to church for a couple weeks. But no one, including the preacher, reached out! Since then, I no longer attend that particular congregation. Am I expecting too much?

SO HURT IN THE SOUTH

DEAR SO HURT: Please accept my sympathy for the tragic loss of your son. As an active member of that con-

DEAR ABBY  
BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



gregation, you expected more of a response than universal silence. More than one person dropped the ball after your tragedy, and under the circumstances, your hurt is natural. You did the right thing by changing churches, and I hope you are receiving emotional support from the new congregation you have joined.

■■■

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



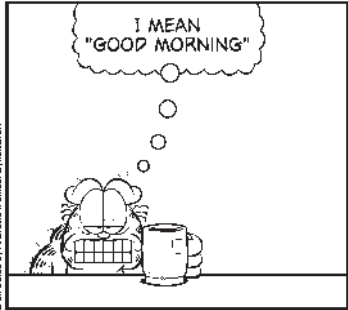
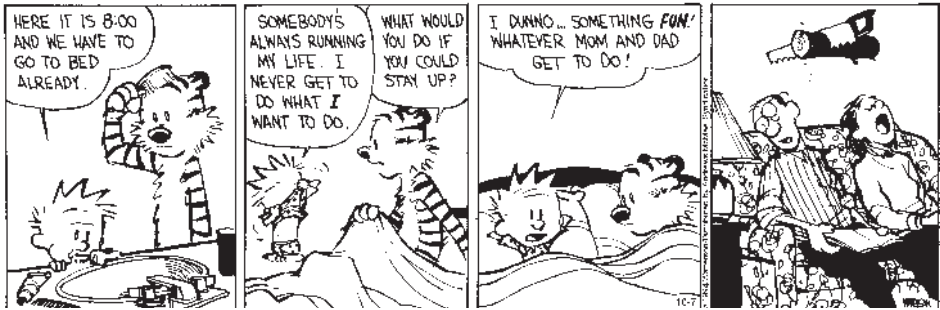
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 34 556, to Cato 35 CPR pros 36 Luxury watch brand 37 "They won't suspect me!" 40 Luau dish 41 Crunchy cookie 42 Got closer 47 Alike (Fr.) 48 Re-nounce 49 Hawked 50 Feminine principle 51 Took to court

DOWN 1 Telly network 2 Kanga's kid 3 Joan of — 4 Louts Bard 6 Playwright Levin 7 First to arrive, perhaps 8 City of India 9 Mayberry boy 10 Survey 11 Adam's grandson 13 Spill the beans 19 "La — Bonita" 20 After-tax amount 21 With (Fr.) 22 Alpha follower 23 Olympic track star 25 April celebration 26 Barbie, e.g. 27 Feed the piggy bank 29 "Ditto" 31 Repair 33 Observe 34 Events "Dirty Jobs" host Mike 37 Works the soil 38 Thus 39 Make well 40 Ivy in Philly 43 Hitter's stat 44 — Claire, Wis. 45 Noshed 46 Scarlet

Solution time: 21 mins.

Last Friday's answer 10-07

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shawn Ashmore, 45; Toni Braxton, 57; Simon Cowell, 65; Joy Behar, 82.

Happy Birthday: An open mind, discipline and a goal will get you where you want to go. Look for opportunities, do your research and explore the possibilities. Worry less about what others think and more about what makes you happy and at peace with yourself. Put your energy into progressive projects and avoid arguments with people trying to push their will on you. Live, love and learn. Your numbers are 8, 13, 19, 26, 30, 38, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Follow your passion and sidestep anyone who interferes with your vision. Choose to use your experience and skills to address current applications, and it will lead to a change in how you earn or handle your money and a chance to connect with someone of interest.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Confusion will surface around joint ventures. Keep your emotions out of the equation and deal with shared expenses cautiously. Maintaining equality will be the key to arriving at a point acceptable to complete your mission. Be smart regarding money, ethics, contracts and your emotional well-being.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your charm will open doors, and your intellectual banter will seal deals. Concentrate on what's important to you and avoid letting anyone sidetrack you with temptation or empty promises. Be a good listener and gather valuable information, but refrain from divulging your intentions, secrets or passwords.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Take the initiative and finish what you start. Your actions will have a bigger impact than your words. Arguing will slow you down and mess with your emotions and the ability to use

your creativity to reach your goal. Protect your reputation, and present your accomplishments with confidence.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Embrace what life offers. The sky is the limit if you are open to change and willing to go the distance to reach your goals. Choose to voice your opinion and take a leadership position, and you will influence people to take up your cause or agenda.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Rethink your plans, budget and prospects. You may crave change, but first you must take care of business. You'll miss an opportunity if you let your emotions take over. Don't mix business with pleasure or let someone else's success tempt you to take part in a risky venture.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A proactive approach will bring positive results. Learn from experience, experts and examples; you will be happy with the results. Focus on wealth, health and achieving the stability and security you require to put your mind at ease. Do things for yourself, and you won't be disappointed.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Pay attention to what's happening in your backyard. Taking care of domestic business will help you recognize what changes to consider and how to make your dreams come true. Take the initiative and do things your way. Being innovative and diverse will help you reach your objective.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Observe, strategize and prepare to take on anyone who stands in your way or tries to take advantage of you. Look for opportunities that connect you with people who have something to contribute, not those who want a free ride. An equal-opportunity partnership looks promising.

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't let your words mess up what you want. Demands will fall short, but incentives and compliments can encourage others to accommodate your dreams. Demonstrations will make a difference; say little and do a lot, and you'll get the results you desire. Entertain formulating a fruitful partnership.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Put more thought into managing your investments, medical issues and personal preferences. An open exchange with an expert will offer insight and opportunity into how to grow your interests and intentions. Explore the possibilities and implement what works best for you. Mixed emotions will prompt a personal change.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take a back seat and observe. The information you gather will help you reverse a potential problem, temptation or financial loss. Time is on your side, and being patient will pay off. Focus on health, wealth and happiness, and walk away from ill advice, excessive behavior and negative influences.

Birthday Baby: You are meticulous, opportunistic and passionate. You are proactive and insightful.

Ⓢ: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. Ⓜ: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. Ⓟ: Focus and you'll reach your goals. Ⓠ: Aim high; start new projects. Ⓡ: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

10/7

Difficulty: ★

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

7 8 2 6 5 4 9 1 3  
3 6 1 7 9 8 2 4 5  
9 5 4 2 3 1 8 6 7  
1 4 7 8 2 6 3 5 9  
8 2 3 9 1 5 6 7 4  
5 9 6 4 7 3 1 2 8  
6 7 5 3 8 2 4 9 1  
2 1 8 5 4 9 7 3 6  
4 3 9 1 6 7 5 8 2

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

YOUR CHARIOT AWAITS Solution: 7 letters

E C N A M O R O T A I D A L G  
A X S T E E R T N E I C N A R  
N T P S E V S O L D I E R R E  
T E O L H M I V B R I D E C E  
I V O E O D P R I C E A A H C  
Q L R E A R V L D N L A E E  
U E T H R A E L E P T W T R E  
E V R W A U R L L D T A H Y S  
G I A O H G A A C A A G G R T  
A L V O P V T O X O B O I E H  
I L E D E F A L Y R N N L I G  
R A L I O C E E U T A T S N I  
R G D R H C A R R I A G E S S  
A E M P I R E P R I N C E S S  
M U S E U M T R O P S N A R T

© 2024 Andrews McMeel Syndicate www.wonderword.com 10/7  
Ancient, Antique, Archery, Axle, Battle, Bride, Carriage, Cart, Coach, Contest, Drive, Empire, Explore, Gladiator, Greece, Guard, Light, Marriage, Medieval, Museum, Pharaoh, Platform, Princess, Reins, Road, Romance, Sightsee, Soldier, Statue, Steer, Temple, Transport, Travel, Troops, Velvet, Village, Vintage, Wagon, Wheels, Wood  
Last Friday's answer: Strategy  
The NEW Volume 77 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.  
or call 1-800-642-6480, (in Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.



# Cleveland's bullpen torments Tigers as Guardians win ALDS opener



## CLEVELAND

(AP)—Lane Thomas hit a three-run homer in a five-run outburst before Detroit got an out, and the Cleveland Guardians unleashed their lights-out bullpen to complete a four-hitter in a 7-0 win over the Tigers in an AL Division Series opener on Saturday.

Thomas' shot—on his first career postseason swing—helped the Guardians cool off the Tigers, who stormed into the playoffs with a second-half surge before sweeping AL West champion Houston in the wild-card round.

"It was electric," said Thomas, acquired from Washington at the trade deadline. "It was everything I had thought and more."

Tanner Bibee pitched 4 2/3 innings before Guardians manager Stephen Vogt swung the door open to baseball's best bullpen to finish off the Tigers.

Cleveland's relievers combined for 4 1/3 hitless innings to finish and match the largest shutout victory margin in club postseason history. Detroit struck out 13 times and didn't get a runner past first in the final four innings.

The shutout was the worst in Detroit playoff history since Game 1 of the 1945 World Series.

"We're going to see a lot of this bullpen," Tigers manager A.J. Hinch said. "The more you look at them, hopefully, the more comfortable you get."

Cleveland's bullpen was as advertised. Rookie Cade Smith (1-0) replaced Bibee and struck out all four batters. Tim Herrin took care of the seventh, Hunter Gaddis the eighth, and Emmanuel Clase, who led the AL with 47 saves, worked the ninth.

David Fry added a two-run double for the AL Central champion Guardians, who were unaffected by not playing for almost a week with a first-round bye.

"We came out ready to swing the bat, and we looked like we didn't take five days off," Vogt said.

Game 2 is Monday, when the Tigers will turn to Tarik Skubal, the favorite to win the AL Cy Young Award, to try and even the best-of-five series.

The 2,327th meeting between Detroit and Cleveland was the first between the franchises and Central division rivals in the postseason.

It was as good as over after one inning.

Hinch has made the right decisions for months as his young club went from being under .500 at the trade deadline to qualifying for the postseason with a 33-13 flourish



Cleveland Guardians' Lane Thomas shouts as he runs the bases after hitting a home run in the first inning during Game 1 of baseball's AL Division Series against the Detroit Tigers, Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024, in Cleveland.

since Aug. 11.

Hinch used his bullpen in Game 1 from the start and it backfired.

## YANKEES 6, ROYALS 5

(AP)—Alex Verdugo hit a tiebreaking single in the seventh inning and saved at least one run with a sliding catch along the left-field line, boosting the New York Yankees over the Kansas City Royals 6-5 on Saturday night in their AL Division Series opener.

New York's Gleyber Torres and Kansas City's MJ Melendez hit two-run homers in a back-and-forth game in which the Royals wasted leads of 1-0, 3-2 and 5-4 and the Yankees failed to hold 2-1 and 4-3 margins. It was the first postseason game with five lead changes, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

"What a game!" Yankees manager Aaron Boone said.

Kansas City pitchers tied their season high with eight walks, forcing in a pair of runs in the fifth inning. The Yankees were just 1 for 11 with runners in scoring position before Verdugo lined a single off loser Michael Lorenzen.

Verdugo's hit scored Jazz Chisholm Jr., who singled leading off and stole second on a play allowed to stand following a video review.

"I think we did have a really good argument that that should have been overturned," Royals manager Matt Quatraro said.

Boone started a slumping Verdugo in left over rookie Jasson Dominguez in a decision influenced by defense.

"I feel like I'm pretty real with myself," Verdugo said.

"As in fans booing me, fans getting on me. I understand it. I was booing myself, too."

Verdugo entered in a 3-for-25 skid at the plate.

"I just kind of let it spiral out of control a little bit," Verdugo said. "For me, it was just really leaning on my guys in the clubhouse. They all got my back. They all know what kind of player I am and how I played throughout my whole career and just kept telling me, 'Man, don't let this season or this little glimpse make your whole year. You can make up for a lot of things in the playoffs.'"

With the Yankees trailing 3-2, Verdugo made a sliding catch on Michael Massey's fourth-inning fly just inside the line to strand two runners. The ball hit the heel of Verdugo's glove and bounced off his chest before he grabbed it with his bare hand.

"Thank goodness it popped over to the left hand, so it all worked out," he said.

Chisholm, playing third base this year for the first time after the Yankees acquired him from Miami at the July trade deadline, made three fine defensive plays, two with the help of first baseman Oswaldo Cabrera, starting because of Anthony Rizzo's fractured fingers.

## METS 6, PHILLIES 2

(AP)—Mark Vientos and Brandon Nimmo keyed another late New York comeback, helping the Mets breakthrough for five runs in the eighth inning against a pair of All-Star relievers as they rallied past the Philadelphia Phillies

6-2 on Saturday in Game 1 of their National League Division Series.

"It puts pressure on the other side right away," Nimmo said.

The Mets had been stymied by Phillies ace Zack Wheeler, held to just one hit while trailing 1-0 after seven innings.

With Wheeler lifted after nine strikeouts and a startling 30 swings-and-misses over 111 pitches, the Mets—whose whirlwind week included a victory in a makeup double-header at Atlanta to clinch a postseason spot and three games in the Wild Card Series at Milwaukee—pounced against losing pitcher Jeff Hoffman and fellow reliever Matt Strahm in the eighth.

In true New York fashion this October, the Mets had to rally, not just on the scoreboard, but with a gut-check in each critical at-bat.

Francisco Alvarez hit a leadoff single against Hoffman before three straight batters reached base after facing 0-2 counts. Francisco Lindor worked a walk and Vientos followed with a tying single. Nimmo laced a go-ahead single off Strahm past a drawn-in infield for a 2-1 lead.

Pinch-hitter J.D. Martinez added an RBI single and Pete Alonso, who hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the ninth inning of the series clincher in Milwaukee, and Starling Marte each added a sacrifice fly in the eighth for a 5-1 lead that sent the Mets into a frenzy in the dugout.

Nimmo added an RBI single in the ninth. All eight of New York's hits—seven in the final two innings—were singles.

After the last out, New York fans crowded the rows

behind their dugout and chanted "Let's Go Mets! Let's Go Mets!"

Leave it to the Mets to win this one late—they've scored 18 runs in the eighth and ninth innings over six games since Monday. New York joined the 1980 Phillies and 1999 Mets as the only teams to win consecutive playoff games after trailing in the eighth inning or later.

"One of the things we've talked about is just finishing the game all the way to the ninth inning," Vientos said. "And the game is never over until the ninth. We've kind of been running with that mentality, I feel like the past week in Atlanta. Then the last game in Milwaukee we kind of showed that and it's giving us more confidence for that."

The Phillies were left reeling headed into Sunday's Game 2 after they wasted Wheeler's splendid outing.

Citizens Bank Park, once home to Red October, has turned into a nightmare the last two seasons. The Phillies held a 3-2 series lead last season in the NLCS but lost Games 6 and 7 to Arizona at home.

Kyle Schwarber launched Kodai Senga's third pitch into the second deck in right field, extending his playoff record for leadoff homers to five.

## DODGERS 7, PADRES 5

(AP)—Shohei Ohtani hit a three-run homer in his postseason debut, Teoscar Hernández's two-run single gave Los Angeles its first lead in a playoff game in two years, and the Dodgers beat the San Diego Padres 7-5 in their NL Division Series opener Saturday.

Manny Machado's two-run homer off starter Yoshinobu Yamamoto, also making his first playoff appearance, put Los Angeles in an early 3-0 hole.

Ohtani quickly bailed out the Dodgers with his two-out homer that tied it in the second inning. The Japanese superstar went deep with Hall of Fame pitcher Sandy Koufax looking on and fans chanting "MVP! MVP!" His shot traveled 372 feet to right field, the sellout crowd of 53,028 recording it all on their phones.

"I just really have never seen a guy in the biggest of moments come through as consistently as he has," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "I wish a lot of other players had that ability. He's just very unique in that."

San Diego went ahead 5-3 before the Dodgers rallied with three runs in the fourth.

Tommy Edman scored on a wild pitch by reliever Adrian Morejon, who took the

loss. Ohtani had a broken-bat single and later scored, along with Mookie Betts, on Hernández's single off Jeremiah Estrada that put the Dodgers ahead 6-5.

It was their first lead in a postseason game since the seventh inning of Game 4 against the Padres in a 2022 NLDS. Los Angeles was swept by Arizona in a Division Series last year.

"We need to fight, and that's what we did," Roberts said. "Guys in the 'pen picked us up and the offense was relentless with their at-bats."

The Dodgers earned their first postseason win since Oct. 11, 2022, in Game 1 of the Division Series against San Diego. They improved to 1-15 in the playoffs when trailing by three or more runs through the first inning.

Down 7-5, the Padres had the potential tying runs on base with two outs in the ninth. Fernando Tatis Jr. singled off Blake Treinen before Jurickson Profar walked to bring up Machado, who struck out swinging. Treinen earned the save.

San Diego also had the potential tying runs in scoring position in the eighth. Michael Kopech issued a leadoff walk to Profar before Machado took a called third strike. Jackson Merrill, a top contender for NL Rookie of the Year, drew a 10-pitch walk.

Dodgers shortstop Miguel Rojas made an over-the-shoulder catch on Xander Bogaerts' pop fly in shallow left-center before Treinen walked Jake Cronenworth to load the bases. With blue rally towels waving furiously, Treinen struck out Donovan Solano swinging to end the threat.

The Padres' big three—three-time batting champion Luis Arraez, Fernando Tatis Jr. and Machado—were a combined 4 for 14 with three strikeouts. Tatis' double in the third registered 118.9 mph off the bat, the hardest-hit ball of his career and the second hardest-hit in the postseason during the Statcast era.

"We didn't close the door," Tatis said. "They're coming alive so we better outscore them. Find a way to make hits happen no matter what."

It took Ohtani 875 regular-season games to finally reach the playoffs, having spent his first six years in the majors with the Los Angeles Angels, who never had a winning record during his tenure. He finished 2 for 5 with three RBIs, two runs scored and two strikeouts.

"I could really feel the intensity of the stadium before the game began and I thoroughly enjoyed it," Ohtani said through an interpreter.



# Cousins throws for 509 yards, hits Hodge in OT to give Falcons win over Bucs



ATLANTA (AP)—Kirk Cousins sure earned all that money Thursday night.

The \$180 million quarterback threw for a career-high 509 yards and four touchdowns, the last of them a 45-yard scoring pass to KhaDarel Hodge in overtime that gave the Atlanta Falcons an improbable 36-30 victory over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

"What a night," Cousins said. "I'm exhausted."

After a wild fourth quarter that featured a blocked field goal, a fumble and an interception, Cousins and the Falcons (3-2) got the ball back at their own 20 with 1:14 remaining in regulation and no timeouts, trailing 30-27.

Cousins completed five passes to push Atlanta to the Buccaneers 29, then hustled to the line to spike the ball with a single second left. In all the confusion, the Falcons were called for delay of game as they lined up for a tying field goal, but it didn't cost them.

Even with the five-yard penalty, Youngbue Koo knocked it through from 52 yards to force overtime, one week after he made a 58-yarder with 2 seconds left to beat the New Orleans Saints.

"I'm proud of the grit," Cousins said. "In this league, that's what it takes. We were gritty tonight."

The Falcons won the coin



Atlanta Falcons quarterback Kirk Cousins (18) celebrates with the fans after the team defeated the Tampa Bay Buccaneers during overtime in an NFL football game Thursday, Oct. 3, 2024, in Atlanta.

toss in overtime and made sure Baker Mayfield and the Buccaneers (3-2) didn't get their hands on the ball again.

Cousins connected with Drake London on a couple of passes before throwing a short one to Hodge, who broke a tackle at the 40, sliced through a gap in the secondary and raced untouched to the end zone to end the game.

The four TD passes tied Cousins' career best, while his yardage through the air easily eclipsed his previous high of

460 with the Minnesota Vikings in 2022.

"The guys played hard," coach Raheem Morris said. "They played to the end."

After signing his big free agent deal with the Falcons, which included \$100 million in guaranteed money, Cousins got off to sluggish start in Atlanta.

But he heard nothing but cheers on a night when the Falcons inducted longtime starting quarterback Matt Ryan into their Ring of Honor.

The 36-year-old Cousins even swayed to the rap hit "Swag Surfin'" during the postgame celebration, firmly establishing his chops in the A-T-L.

With Matty Ice cheering him on, Cousins broke Ryan's team record for passing yards in a game (503) with one of the most prolific performances in NFL history. Only 14 quarterbacks have thrown for more yards in a game, led by Norm Van Brocklin's mark of 554 yards that has stood since 1951.

"Outstanding," Morris said in a succinct but fitting assessment of Cousins' performance.

Mayfield threw three touchdown passes, including a pair to Mike Evans, and Chase McLaughlin booted three field goals. The last of them was a 53-yarder that put the Buccaneers ahead 30-27 with 10:23 remaining.

Mayfield felt like he let this one slip away.

"All I care about is wins," he said. "I've got to find a

way to finish that game out on offense."

The Falcons tied it with a gutty fourth-down call by Morris early in the fourth quarter.

After Tyler Allgeier was thrown for a 2-yard loss on third-and-2, the Falcons didn't even consider a field goal from the Bucs 12.

Atlanta lined right back up and Cousins threw a pass to Darnell Mooney, who made the grab at the marker but wasn't content with just a first down. He shook off a tackler and scooted to the end zone.

Mooney also had a 24-yard touchdown catch during a back-and-forth first half that ended with the Buccaneers up 24-17.

Both offenses ran up and down the field, combining for 488 yards, 28 first downs and just one punt over the first two quarters.

Cousins had an 18-yard touchdown pass to London, who finished with 12 catches for 154 yards. Mooney had nine receptions for 105.

"I spread it around and the players made plays," Cousins said. "I'm grateful for the progress we've made. We're getting better and better each week."

Koo missed his first field goal of the year from 41 yards and had another attempt blocked, but he also connected from 54 and 48 yards before splitting the uprights with the tying kick.

## Cowboys, Steelers meet in game between two teams at an early season crossroads

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Justin Fields has done just about everything right while filling in for Russell Wilson.

He's largely avoided mistakes. He's evolved from game manager to difference-maker. And he's done it with an inherent calm that's quickly won over his teammates.

It's gotten to the point that Pittsburgh Steelers coach Mike Tomlin has propped open the door for Fields to keep the starting quarterback job on a full-time basis even after the calf injury that's sidelined Wilson for a month is fully healed.

Asked if there's anything Fields can do to further sway him, Tomlin smiled.

"Play well," the NFL's longest-tenured coach said. "Win."

Another chance for Fields to make his case awaits on Sunday night when the Steelers (3-1) host the Dallas Cowboys (2-2).

The game will be a litmus test for both clubs. The Cowboys are hoping to prove they're more the team that steamrolled Cleveland in

Week 1 than the one that was outclassed in losses to New Orleans and Baltimore. Pittsburgh is smarting after the NFL's top-ranked defense was pushed around early by Indianapolis in a 27-24 setback last Sunday that slowed some of the early season optimism surrounding its best start since 2020.

While Dallas will be without star pass rusher Micah Parsons—who will miss the first game of his career because of an injury after a high ankle sprain sustained against the New York Giants on Sept. 26—the Cowboys believe they have more than enough depth to get by.

"It is a great opportunity for others," Dallas coach Mike McCarthy said. "We're excited about it. We took a step in New York, had a chance to catch our breath. Obviously, injuries are part of it. You never want to lose any of your guys, especially top guys. This is a great opportunity to show the quality of our football team."

The same for Pittsburgh in a matchup between two

teams that know a little something about playing under the lights. Dallas' 106 victories in primetime are the most in NFL history. Pittsburgh is second at 98.

"When you look at two teams everybody goes for back in the day, it's always Cowboys and Steelers," Pittsburgh linebacker Patrick Queen said. "'Sunday Night Football,' everybody watching, the moments everybody lives for. So you've got the whole world watching, what are you going to do about it?"

### Coming home

McCarthy is a Pittsburgh native who grew up in the heyday of the Steel Curtain Steelers, four-time champions in the 1970s. Two of those Super Bowl victories came against the Cowboys.

He was a sports fan, too, so he remembers Pittsburgh Pirates icons Roberto Clemente and Willie Stargell, who won two World Series in the '70s. And Heisman Trophy-winning running back Tony

Dorsett, who led the University of Pittsburgh to the 1976 national championship.

"Those were great years," McCarthy said. "Four Super Bowls, two World Series and a national championship. It was a great time to be a kid in Pittsburgh."

McCarthy visited Pittsburgh twice as Green Bay's coach. He lost both times, though he did lead the Packers over his hometown team in the 2010 Super Bowl. And yes, he's heard about it when he visits.

"I think one of the best compliments I could receive is when I do run into even strangers back there, they tell me, 'If we were going to lose one, I'm glad it was to you,'" McCarthy said. "I think that speaks to being from (there). We're a fraternity."

### Ready to run, part 1

The Steelers are dedicated to running the football, even though they're not particularly efficient at it at the moment. Pittsburgh's 138 rushing attempts are tied for tops in the NFL. Yet the Steelers are aver-

aging just 3.7 yards per carry, only good for 26th in the 32-team league.

Tomlin downplayed his team's sluggishness, attributing it to playing three of four on the road to start the season. He expects things to get going eventually.

"It's not going to dictate a behavioral change from us as a collective in terms of how we prepare," Tomlin said. "It's reasonable to expect us to get better with more exposure and opportunity in that area."

The running game could receive a bit of a boost with veteran guard Isaac Seumalo expected to return after missing a month with a pectoral injury.

### Ready to run, part 2

There's no indication the Cowboys will add Dalvin Cook to the 53-man roster despite having the worst rushing offense in the NFL. Rico Dowdle appears to be the primary back after getting 18 carries to just nine for Ezekiel Elliott over the past two games.

The Cowboys signed Cook to the practice squad just be-

fore the season started. The New York Jets used Cook sparingly in 2023 before a late-season release, and the four-time Pro Bowler played in the first of two playoff games for Baltimore after the Ravens signed him.

### Only the Cowboys

In a truly "only the Cowboys" moment, Jerry Jones' helicopter landed on the practice field close to the start of Wednesday's workout, delivering the Dallas owner for about 20 minutes of viewing before he went to his office.

Asked if he had ever had a helicopter land during practice in his 30-plus years as an NFL coach, McCarthy said, "Let's be honest, he was almost late for practice. I thought I was going to have to get on his (rear end). I was glad he made it."

The helicopter moment came on defensive end K.J. Henry's first full workday for the Cowboys after being signed off Cincinnati's practice squad.

"Is this like an everyday thing?" Henry said he asked one of his new teammates. "I mean, this is real Dallas-like."



# Plenty of NBA teams mixing the grind of training camp with resort life

**BRADENTON, Fla.** (AP)—The Cleveland Cavaliers were hitting golf balls into a lake and some people couldn't figure out why. Jimmy Butler of the Miami Heat played dominoes in the Bahamas until the wee hours of the morning. The Golden State Warriors sprawled out on a Hawaiian lawn for some morning yoga.

No, NBA training camps are not all about basketball.

With about half the league going on the road for at least part of their training camps that started this week—destinations include the Bahamas, Hawaii, Las Vegas, Nashville and Montreal—it can seem like the first few days of the season have a vacation feel to them. Hard work in the gym is happening, of course, but teams obviously are seeing value in bonding and experiences off the court as well.

“I was honestly sick of traveling from the summer,” Warriors guard Stephen Curry, part of the team that won gold for the U.S. this summer at the Paris Olympics and then spent time last month in China, said after he got to Hawaii. “But this is not a bad vibe, for sure.”



Jimmy Butler arrives at the premiere of “Starting 5” on Monday, Sept. 23, 2024 at The Egyptian Theatre Hollywood in Los Angeles.

Sentiments like those are being heard in plenty of NBA camps this week—whether it was after the Warriors did yoga to start a morning, some members of Cleveland’s camp got some fishing in or after Boston and Denver got settled in Abu Dhabi for preseason games this weekend.

The Cavaliers, who are in Bradenton on Florida’s Gulf coast for camp, have four courts and tons of amenities available to them for practices

at IMG Academy—a sports training high school. But being at a posh Florida resort also gives the Cavs the opportunity for things like team meals outdoors, including one where passers-by wondered why players were splashing golf balls into the water. (The golf balls were biodegradable, with no harmful effect on the environment or marine life.)

“We’re obviously working, working hard, but doing a lot of team-

building stuff,” Cavs coach Kenny Atkinson said. “It’s been really cool.”

The Warriors and Los Angeles Clippers are in Hawaii. Miami and Philadelphia are training a few miles apart in the Bahamas, at different resorts. Dallas headed to Las Vegas for a few days at UNLV. Toronto went to Montreal, where the Raptors will eventually be joined by Washington for a preseason game. Memphis and New Orleans both went to Nashville.

Philadelphia coach Nick Nurse’s hat this week has the image of palm trees embroidered on the side, a nod to the tropics. It seems entirely possible that those are the only palm trees he’s seen so far this week; it’s no vacation for him.

“We really like to just get out and get away and get on our own. That’s the big thing,” Nurse said. “I think the Bahamas had been on the radar for a few years in the organization and it was the turn to come here. The main thing is, ‘Can we get away? Can we get a great facility where people are really going to welcome us and give us everything we need?’ ... I haven’t done anything except go back to my room and do stuff. I haven’t even walked outside yet.”

Milwaukee is having camp in

California—it was something coach Doc Rivers started planning shortly after he took the Bucks job midway through last season—and Brooklyn will have the second half of its camp out there as well. New York went to South Carolina, while Atlanta and Charlotte both hit the road but kept it drivable; the Hawks went to Georgia’s campus in Athens, the Hornets went a couple hours away to Duke.

“Sometimes it’s just good to be somewhere else,” Hawks coach Quin Snyder said. “There’s no magic other than the fact that you get a chance to be together and have kind of a change of scenery.”

The Heat have been in the Bahamas for camp multiple times and this year, that meant Butler got to be in three countries, on two continents, in the same day. Travel issues kept him from leaving France—the last stop of his summer journeys—until Monday morning, but he got to Miami that afternoon for medical tests and other duties, then made it to the Bahamas that night.

## FMS

From page 16

both free throws, making it 19-17.

Despite the mounting pressure and the clock winding down, the gritty Hilitais refused to quit. Yet FMS held firm, and HMS, despite a few chances to tie, couldn’t convert.

With less than 10 seconds left, Logan Daniel was fouled, sending the

Napu Riders to the free throw line once more. Daniel went 1 for 2, sealing the 3-point victory, 20-17.

Throughout the second half, the lead swung back and forth as neither team could break free from the other. HMS’ Leon Galarse pushed the pace with fast-break plays, but FMS’ defense held strong.

HMS held 2-point leads at various points, but FMS kept responding—tying the game at 11-11, 13-13, and

15-15. FMS eventually pulled ahead 17-15, but HMS’ Steven Tudela drove inside to tie it one final time at 17-17, though HMS couldn’t capitalize on the momentum.

In the end, Daniel led FMS with 14 points, while Galarse led HMS with eight.

In other results that night, HMS JV defeated Mount Carmel School JV, 31-6; Dandan Middle School JV trounced Chacha

Ocean View Middle School, 37-5; Tanapag Middle School took down Saipan Community School, 20-4; COVMS edged DMS, 49-27; and MCS shot down Grace Christian Academy, 43-11.

**FMS 20** – Daniel 14, Rogolifoi 2, Tenorio 2, Pangilinan 2.

**HMS 17** – Galarse 8, Abejo 5, Louis 2, Tudela 2.

**Scoring by halves:** 11-9; 20-17.

## HANNAM

From page 16

neighborhoods to adopt roads and public areas to foster a sense of ownership and pride.

He underscored the importance of organizing youth activities, such as the development of the basketball court, to provide positive outlets for young people and steer them away from negative influences. Mayor Camacho expressed gratitude to community partners, particularly Hannam Supermarket, for their commitment to giving back to Saipan.

Acknowledging the municipality’s financial constraints, he reiterated his dedication to mobilizing resources and support from local leaders and organizations, maintaining an optimistic outlook that a united community can overcome obstacles to create a better living environment for all.

As the initiative gained momentum, Li took the stage to share his insights on the project’s significance.

He emphasized that refurbishing the Koblerville Basketball Court is not merely a physical improvement but an essential investment in the community and its youth.

“This project is not just about fixing this basketball court; it’s about supporting our community,” Li stated. He highlighted the importance of providing a space for children to engage in physical activities, learn teamwork, and cultivate friendships. Addressing the challenges posed by technology, he expressed a desire to offer youth opportunities to develop critical life skills such as discipline, sportsmanship, and leadership.

Li thanked the mayor and local government for their support, acknowledging that without this court, the community would miss out on valuable experiences. He extended

his gratitude to his mother for her unwavering encouragement, attributing his passion for community service to her guidance.

He also urged everyone present to continue supporting one another and work collectively toward making Saipan an even better place.

After Li’s heartfelt remarks, Propst stepped forward to commend his efforts. “We try to pitch in as much as we can because we know that you all are spread out and need support,” he stated. “We can’t do it alone; we need to do it with teamwork. I am so proud of you, Charlie. As a 12th grader, you’re amazing for stepping up to the plate.”

Propst expressed admiration not only for Li’s initiative but also for his supportive family, noting, “You must have wonderful parents to inspire you, especially your mom, Stacey. We are grateful to you and your family for all you contribute.”

He closed by thanking the mayor, Li, Wong, and everyone involved in making the Adopt-a-Place program a success, reinforcing the importance of community collaboration.

Following Propst’s remarks, Rep. Camacho expressed his excitement about the adoption of the basketball court. “I have been waiting for this basketball court to be adopted, and I want to extend my gratitude to Hannam,” he said.

He acknowledged the current financial unpredictability, emphasizing the importance of collaboration: “The only way to get these things done is through a partnership with the private sector. We really appreciate your help in this effort.”

He also expressed gratitude on behalf of the Precinct 1 representatives, stating, “Thank you, mayor, and many thanks to you, Miss Stacey, and Charlie, for your commitment to this initiative.

watch,” he added.

The league is in partnership with Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc., Senate President Edith DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan), Rep. Joel Camacho, House Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), and Rep. Malcolm Omar (Ind-Saipan).

Results of the first day of games will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

## SOFTBALL

From page 16

said Camacho.

As for their performances on opening day, he said, “all the teams that came out were awesome. Their players are all mixed—they’re not from an original team. They’re all scattered around and they helped each

other throughout the games.”

With the weekend forecasted to be rainy, he said, “We were just hoping that today (Saturday) was not going to be as rainy as expected. God blessed us with sun and we played—it was very hot.”

Along with this league, Camacho looks forward to the next slow pitch league next year. Along with that, tryouts for the 2025 Pacific Mini Games

in Palau will be opening soon. “We’ll try to scout players, see their performance, and once we have the opening tryouts, we’ll see if they come out,” he said.

“Thank you to all the fans, families, and team that came out. We hope to continue and to look forward to the women playing. This is not for the association—it’s for the women. So come out to play and

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES							
NFL STANDINGS							
AMERICAN CONFERENCE							
East							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Buffalo	3	1	0	.750	122	83	
N.Y. Jets	2	2	0	.500	76	62	
Miami	1	3	0	.250	45	103	
New England	1	3	0	.250	52	87	
South							
Houston	3	1	0	.750	79	94	
Indianapolis	2	2	0	.500	85	85	
Tennessee	1	3	0	.250	79	90	
Jacksonville	0	4	0	.000	60	109	
North							
Pittsburgh	3	1	0	.750	75	53	
Baltimore	2	2	0	.500	106	88	
Cincinnati	1	3	0	.250	102	104	
Cleveland	1	3	0	.250	66	87	
West							
Kansas City	4	0	0	1.000	92	72	
Denver	2	2	0	.500	62	55	
L.A. Chargers	2	2	0	.500	68	50	
Las Vegas	2	2	0	.500	78	97	
NATIONAL CONFERENCE							
East							
Washington	3	1	0	.750	121	102	
Dallas	2	2	0	.500	97	104	
Philadelphia	2	2	0	.500	86	96	
N.Y. Giants	1	3	0	.250	60	84	
South							
Atlanta	3	2	0	.600	111	115	
Tampa Bay	3	2	0	.600	127	114	
New Orleans	2	2	0	.500	127	70	
Carolina	1	3	0	.250	73	129	
North							
Minnesota	4	0	0	1.000	116	59	
Detroit	3	1	0	.750	104	82	
Chicago	2	2	0	.500	77	75	
Green Bay	2	2	0	.500	104	89	
West							
Seattle	3	1	0	.750	102	85	
San Francisco	2	2	0	.500	103	82	
Arizona	1	3	0	.250	96	106	
L.A. Rams	1	3	0	.250	75	115	

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS





**Cleveland's bullpen torments Tigers as Guardians win ALDS opener**  
**PAGE 13**

# Saipan Tribune Sports

**Plenty of NBA teams mixing the grind of training camp with resort life**  
**PAGE 15**



16 MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## FMS beats HMS in rivalry game



LEIGH GASES

Francisco M. Sablan Middle School's Logan Daniel protects the ball from incoming Hopwood Middle School defenders during their finals rematch in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2024-2025 last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

It had the vibes of a championship game as the crowd's cheers nearly brought the gym down during the finals rematch of southside rivals Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Napu Riders and Hopwood Middle School Hilitais in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2024-2025 last Friday.



LEIGH GASES

Hopwood Middle School's Zuriel Abejo sets up the play during their finals rematch against Francisco M. Sablan Middle School in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2024-2025 last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



The raucous atmosphere at the Marianas High School Gymnasium

mirrored the intensity on the court, as the defending champion Hilitais suffered their first loss of the season, 17-20, while FMS extended their undefeated streak to six games.

The game was hotly contested from the opening jump ball, keeping fans on the edge of their seats with non-stop back-and-forth action that initially favored HMS. FMS and HMS were deadlocked early, but more accurate shooting from HMS eventually gave them an 11-7 lead.

However, that lead evaporated as HMS faltered down the stretch. Crucial free throws by FMS' Jairus Pangilinan, with just over a minute left, became the turning point.

The gym was deafening as an undefeated record and school pride hung in the balance. The score was tied 17-17, but a foul on Pangilinan proved decisive as he sank

See FMS on Page 15

## Women's softball league underway



LEIGH GASES

The six teams of the Inaugural NMI Softball Women's League take the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field in Susupe during the opening ceremony last Saturday.

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



The Inaugural NMI Softball Women's League blew full steam ahead on a blazing hot Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field in Susupe.

The league under the newly formed NMI Softball Association Inc. has six teams vying for the championship—Lady Blue Jays, 670 Babes, Wetz, Batties, Dirty Diamonds, and Man Amigas.

The games are played every Saturday with three games a day starting at 10am, then



LEIGH GASES

NMI Softball Association Inc. president Froilan Camacho umpires the first day of games in the Inaugural NMI Softball Women's League at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field in Susupe last Saturday.

12pm, and then 2pm. The championship schedule will be set as soon as the second round has ended.

It was forecasted to rain heavily last weekend, but Sat-

urday was blessed with the hot sun instead—which worked in favor of the league as all three games were completed.

Before the games, an opening ceremony was held, with the first pitch thrown by Senate President Edith DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan). After the last game, NMISA president Froilan Camacho said in an interview that the first day of games were successful.

"We have six teams and they're all committed to play the game. Everyone showed up and nobody was short of players. They all came out and did the best that they could,"

See SOFTBALL on Page 15

## Hannam Market adopts Koblerville Basketball Court



JERCY DIANA MAXIMO

Hannam Supermarket supervisor Charlie Li and his mother, Stacey Li, owner of Hannam Supermarket, pose for a photo with Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" B. Camacho and other dignitaries at the Adopt-A-Place ceremony held at the Koblerville Basketball Court last Friday afternoon.

By JERCY DIANA MAXIMO  
jercymaximo05@gmail.com  
CORRESPONDENT

The Koblerville Basketball Court in Koblerville was officially adopted last Friday by Hannam Supermarket during the Adopt-A-Place ceremony, part of Saipan Mayor's Office's Adopt-a-Place Program.

Joining Hannam Supermarket supervisor Charlie Li and his mother, Stacey Wang, owner of Hannam Super-

market, were Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" B. Camacho, floor leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), and Rep. Diego Vincent Camacho (D-Saipan).

In a passionate address, mayor Camacho emphasized the urgent need for community unity and cooperation on Saipan, reflecting on the island's rich cultural diversity. He called upon various ethnic groups to collaborate in fostering a

safe and clean environment, especially in light of the recent surge in crime rates, and highlighted the necessity for collective action to address these challenges.

The mayor introduced the Adopt-a-Place program as a pivotal initiative designed to engage the community in beautification and safety efforts. He clarified that the program extends beyond recreational spaces, inviting

See HANNAM on Page 15